

**OWEN'S
TRAVELS**

INTO

DIFFERENT PARTS OF EUROPE,

In the Years 1791 and 1792.

VOL. I.

TRAVELS

INTO

DIFFERENT PARTS OF EUROPE,

IN THE YEARS 1791 AND 1792.

WITH

FAMILIAR REMARKS

ON

PLACES—MEN—AND MANNERS,

By JOHN OWEN, A. M.

LATE FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE.

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VOL. I.

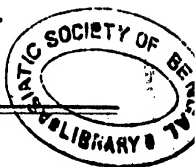
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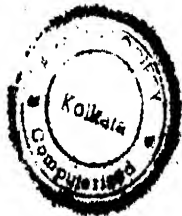


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P R E F A C E.

IT is a subject of equal notoriety and regret, that prefaces have sunk into general disuse, or lost to a great degree their just and original character. The abrupt appearance of an author before the bar of the public is an enterprise of most anxious uncertainty. He seems to be bound by a sort of respect, to present some credentials or submit to some formalities, before he presume upon the ready disposition of so august a judicature to hear and determine his merits. In addition to that duty which respect imposes, a more important claim attaches upon

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him, from the absolute necessity of some preliminary arrangements, for the purposes of a fair and equitable decision. Yet such is the impatience of the bulk of readers, that all which intervenes between the title and the work is considered as an obstacle in the way of their progress, and treated as a slavish compliance with an obsolete ceremony. The influence of this judgment stops not with readers. It relaxes the strictness of authors themselves; and induces a habit of writing with looseness those very preliminaries, which seem to demand the most cautious precision—an indolence natural to the human mind, which is rarely brought to execute with care, what is not likely to be regarded with attention.

It may, however, be affirmed, that the majority of cases in which the merits of writers have been mistaken by the public, might be fairly referred to those defects in the outset of their acquaintance, which a due regard to *some prefatory steps* would have sufficiently supplied. Works of travel stand particularly exposed to the danger of an erroneous judgment. Presenting in many instances a picture of the times, and embracing a variety of circumstances and events, they may be considered as bearing upon modern history; and therefore, like that, encountering the jealousies, suspicions, and prejudices of minds variously interested, and affected by different, and yet existing, impressions. These obstacles can only be with any colour of expectation diminished, by the establish-

ment of some premises, which the reader may adopt, and to which he may refer, as a rule for interpreting the author's mind on points of critical and delicate decision.

The volumes of travel with which the public are now presented profess to stand on more hazardous ground, in respect to a fair and equitable judgment, than any similar work with which they might be compared; and the author is unwilling to commit them to the world, without anticipating, in some premonitory remarks, the leading objections by which they may be attacked.

1. It may be urged, that books of travel have been greatly multiplied, and that the route which the author pursues has in it no chance of novelty. To this the author, with little variation,

tion, concedes. He is ready to admit, that the cabinet is already supplied with a numerous catalogue of entertaining travellers; he is ready to admit, that the outline of his tour differs in very few respects from the ordinary track of fashionable travel; and that the places alluded to in the succeeding volumes are, with few exceptions, such as have been repeatedly viewed and repeatedly described. The attention of the public to travelling journals has however, he presumes, not yet been fatiated by all that has been, nor will probably be satisfied by all that may be said, of foreign countries and foreign manners. The necessity of supplying some species of light and unelaborate reading is felt by all who are acquainted with the public taste: and no productions are,

generally speaking, more readily digested, than those which conduct the fire-side traveller through an extensive tract of country without disturbing him from his arm-chair; and introduce him to all the beauties of a country without exposing him to any of its storms. Relying upon this passion for travelling journals, and the endless variety of an active mind, the author engaged in a correspondence for furnishing expressly the materials of the present volumes. Whether he has rightly judged of the public feelings, and his own powers—will be hereafter decided.

A second objection may probably arise, from the interval which has been suffered to pass between the closing of the Letters and the period of publication. In accounting for this it
is

is necessary to remark, that a considerable portion of the Letters had been transferred to private hands for the security of conveyance, at the time of the author's proceeding upon his expedition into Austria; and that the non-arrival of these at the period expected very considerably delayed the compilation. The publication of Mr. Grey's tour at nearly the same period was also a ground of discouragement. If to this be added the obstruction occasioned to the process of printing by the author's distance from the metropolis and the press, the history of this delay will have been completely given. The reasons for specifying these causes with so much minuteness, will be sufficiently obvious to those who are acquainted with the busy insinuations of calumny and malice. Events of

late occurrence have split society into so many factions, that jealousies are now excited, against which too much precaution cannot be employed. The author expects to hear it insinuated, as it has been already candidly rumoured, that the publication was delayed for the convenience of adapting it to the humour of the times. If the circumstances already enumerated had not sufficiently done away this imputation, the very difficulty itself of effecting such a task, in the varying circumstances of the present period, would discover the folly of the charge. To these, however—if these should yet be insufficient—the author is ready to annex his most serious declaration; that in no instance, the most trivial particulars alone excepted, has he shaped or accommodated the original spirit
and

and train of the journal; and that a considerable number of the Letters have been printed, with no other alteration, than that of a literal or verbal correction.

A third objection may possibly arise in the minds of some, from the internal character of the Letters themselves, the circumstances of which they treat, and the unreserved freedom with which these circumstances are treated. To this it may be replied, that the author has availed himself, in travelling and in writing, of that liberty which has in such cases ever been deemed admissible: and that as he travelled to see and report, he conceives that he could only do justice to himself, the public, and his subject, by depicting, as he has done, manners and sentiments in their natural

tural colours; and expressing, on just occasions, the undissembled feelings of his own mind. If the reader maintains a strict attention—in adjudging *these Letters—to the particular periods in which they were written*; if he considers the circumstances of the times and the state of public opinion; the author is convinced that his enthusiasm will be pronounced to have been of a venial, if not of a commendable character. But events of such variety, and in many particulars of such importance, have taken place during the lapse of the three last years, that the mind will not, without some difficulty, acquire that temper with which it ought to peruse the reports of a preceding period. Labouring under the influence of some recent impressions, the reader will probably
be

be led to confound those dates which ought to be kept religiously distinct; and thus condemn, by a reference to subsequent transactions, what in *the then circumstances he might have* been forward to approve. It must not be dissembled, that the largest portion of the author's anxiety for the fate of his work is founded in an apprehension of this dangerous, yet almost inevitable, confusion in the public mind of dates and feelings. For his own part, he is free to confess, that though his mind has been affected with the most sensible emotion at the horrors which have deformed the name of *Liberty*, he yet can see no reason for reversing all the maxims of the wisest men and the best times; he still can contemplate it—in its genuine characters of benignity and order—as the

friend of man, and the happiest cement of civil society. Not all the disorders which have deluged Europe since the æra of the French revolution have induced him to depart from the *principles** which supported his original admiration of this extraordinary event. The downfall of limited monarchy, the irruption of Jacobinism, Brissotinism, and all the modifications of republican tyranny, have cruelly inverted the original picture; but the very hostility which *these* declared against the *first* reformers, and which themselves have experienced from the present less outrageous and democratic rulers, is an argument in favour of the first legislative assembly, which cannot be defeated, by any species of regular and ingenuous rea-

* Vide Preface to Retrospect.

soning. The evils which have been ingrafted upon this convenient stock, the factions of disorder and equalization, are indisputably lessons of instructive caution against hasty enthusiasm and rash experiment. A torrent of political licentiousness has certainly poured in upon the peaceful and prudent institutions of society; and those who occupy responsible situations are loudly called upon to support the tottering pillars of civil subordination. In the discharge, however, of this duty, no compromise ought to be made of truth and justice; nor should zeal transport us to criminate, what prudence may have forbidden us to admire. So much it seemed expedient to say for the publication of sentiments, whose bearings upon present opinion might else be exposed to misconstruction.

construction. The author is aware that expressions may have been cursorily employed, which the fastidious scruples of some might wish amended or expunged. But he cannot discover any sentiment, with which a candid mind *can*, or a British mind *ought*, to be offended. His opinions on the leading political changes are already before the public; and these will afford a sufficient clue for unravelling and reconciling what might else appear mysterious and inconsistent.

After so much said by way of anticipation, it may now be necessary to say something of the execution. The Letters are short, for the commodiousness of detached reading; and as they were in most instances disposed in packets containing a number, they were originally constructed upon this
concise

concise model, in order to support the analogy of chapters in a regular journal. Dates are for the most part superscribed; but where this is omitted, the Letter is to be considered as forming a part of a packet, and referred to the date of the preceding. As they are intended for the amusement of the *domestic* traveller, they are not charged with any systematic calculations of distance or coin, or any critical adjustment of names and histories. Charts and Itineraries are best suited to the minuteness of the first, and professed disquisitions to the gravity of the last. The style, it is hoped, will be found not wholly unsuited to the familiarity of the occasions; and the errors and redundancies—if such should appear—will probably be viewed with some portion of indulgence, when

when it is considered, that the Letters were written in the warmth of youthful impetuosity—and that it would have been a breach of tacit faith to introduce any further emendations, than those which are justified by usage and acknowledged licence. That the volumes have appeared at all, and that they have not appeared in a less correct state, are owing to the flattering encouragement and the critical services of W. Belsham Esq. to whom these Letters were originally addressed, and whose judicious revision they had the good fortune to receive. In revealing this circumstance, the author is but discharging a debt of gratitude to a man, of whose character—while the public may reasonably differ—his friends can entertain but one opinion. The soundness of his judgment, and
the

the accuracy of his taste, were a security to the author for the justness of his corrections; and a friendship of *long and strict familiarity, undisturbed* by the divisions of politics and theology, have afforded him occasions of general improvement, which it is equally his duty and his pride to acknowledge.

In taking leave of the reader the author has only to request, that a candid distinction may be made in perusing his volumes, between the cast of his mind at the period of his travels, and that which he now professes to have received. The demands of a situation the most grave and important have now engaged him in duties and concerns, which necessarily occupy and solemnize his thoughts; and to the faithful discharge of which,

he is desirous of rendering the experience he has acquired, in every respect subservient. He cannot therefore consign his volumes to the public, without confessing, that the Letters discover, in particular instances, a levity, which in his present character he should feel himself bound to condemn. Amongst those errors in the progress of his tour which he has most to regret, and with which the public have the most concern, are the little respect for the solemnities of the Sabbath, and the rare acknowledgment of a beneficent Providence. These it is judged expedient the rather to mention, as they are errors of easy growth, and which it is of the first importance to discountenance and destroy.

The

The custom of travelling on the Sabbath is of great and notorious prevalence; but certainly the law, which devotes it to religious offices, is broken by such abuse. The looseness of *Catholic*, forms no just precedent for an equal licence in *Protestant*, discipline. Vice is the same on an island or continent, and cannot alter its nature by any change of meridian. The same rule will with equal strictness apply, to the general views of events and circumstances. For if it be an obligation of Christian piety to ascribe the turns of human felicity to the wisdom and benevolence of the Deity, this acknowledgment ought in justice to pervade the details of a long and eccentric tour, beset with hazards, and interspersed with adventure.

With these preliminaries, the author is content to meet the public eye. Convinced that the sentence of the world, when fairly collected, is rarely unjust, he has endeavoured to furnish in the remarks premised, the means of establishing an equitable judgment.

Speak of me as I am—nothing extenuate,
Or set down ought in malice—

Such is the rule, by which, as he should judge of others, he wishes himself to be judged.

JANUARY 7, 1796.

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Brussels, April 21, 1791.

MY engagement with you on leaving England stands full in my recollection. The delay, be assured, has not arisen from any change of inclination or purpose, but solely from circumstances of accidental embarrassment. The channel is now opened, and you shall have no reason to charge me with a want of punctuality.

That your expectations may not however be unreasonably elevated, I will just state the sort of entertainment I undertake to furnish. The track of Europe, which we are to pursue, is already explored; all that could create wonder or

afford delight, has been so often and so fully displayed in the volumes of ancient and modern travel, that curiosity seems nearly exhausted. What in ages past were marvels, are now *bagatelles*; and if astonishment yet remains to be excited, Mandeville and Munchausen have written in vain.

I undertake not to unlock the cabinets of princes, or to disentangle the intrigues of courts: transient observation must ill succeed in developing the mysteries of political systems. Mine will neither be the voyage of the connoisseur, nor the journal of the naturalist: I can neither pretend to throw light upon the schools of painting, nor the science of physics. If I climb the mountain, it will not be to gauge the atmosphere, to analyse the soil, or to class the pebbles: if I range among the vallies, it will not be to gather the lilies, or catch the butterflies. But to human nature in all her varieties, to the

manners of men and the temper of the times, to the habits of life and the state of opinions, my attention will be directed; and my observations will be delivered, with only so much of order or ornament as may happen to suggest itself at the moment of impression.

Apprized therefore of my plan, you will not, if I depart from the strict line of gravity or criticism, censure me as volatile, nor condemn me as superficial. I appeal from your judgment, to your candour; from the critic, to the friend: and if, after all, the merit of *originality* be wholly wanting; you may at least derive a sort of pleasure from that *variety*, under which the most exhausted subjects rarely want success. Fashions the most obsolete are daily advanced by some new colourings; and an old play seldom wants attractions, when revived with new scenes and dresses.

L E T T E R II.

THERE is something very peculiar in the first sensations of a man who finds himself transferred to a foreign clime, whose aspect exhibits a groupe of novel images. This sensation is perhaps felt with additional force by the inhabitant of an island who has been accustomed to regard himself as "*penitus toto divisus orbe.*" The country he leaves, seems explored in every recess, though he may not have traversed half its provinces: all before him forms a mighty vista, which he contemplates with eager anxiety.

I confess the first sight of the French coast operated upon me like enchantment. With it seemed associated all the images which bore relation to the history of this wide extended empire—the magnificence of its kings, and the lustre of its heroes; its
celebrity

celebrity in arts, in letters, and in arms. When I considered that this gallant nation, once the admiration and the dread of Europe, was become the seat of internal distraction and the theatre of political experiment, I sighed over the recollection of its departed grandeur. But when I traced with deeper reflection the foundation of these divisions, and the objects of this experiment—when I viewed in impartial retrospect, the ambition and perfidy which so remarkably characterized the government of that nation; how incompatible its wars with the principles of reason or humanity, how formidable a rival it had ever proved to the power, how determined an enemy to the repose, of Britain—when I reflected how the cabals of this court had perpetuated dissension in the kingdoms of Europe, to gratify the passions and aggrandize the power of its princes; and in how many instances the blood of nations had been sacrificed to the caprice of

a mistress, or the intrigues of a confessor, I could not but exult in the changes effected by the united energies of philosophy and patriotism.

The disorders which accompany every revolution of political moment, are the indispensable terms upon which such felicity is to be obtained; torrents of blood have been deemed not wantonly spent, to procure a less good: and I could not but anticipate the coming æra, when the last touches shall be put to a revolution, which has astonished, and may instruct mankind:—when out of the ruins of tyranny and servitude, shall arise a government, flourishing in all the lustre of reasonable authority and just subordination; a government whose *internal* policy shall exhibit a king ruling by law, and a people obeying by choice; whose *external* policy shall display the happy effects of an unambitious and equitable system of conduct, in the permanent tranquillity of Europe.

The

The ancient prejudices of this nation acknowledged no heroism but that of the sword, and applauded no achievements but those of conquest. It was reserved for a later æra, and a more enlightened legislature, to establish the dominion of reason on the ruins of prejudice; to annex to the life of each individual, an importance hitherto unfelt; to convert the laurels of war into civic wreaths; and decree those triumphs to the defenders of liberty, which had been prescriptively appropriated to the desolators of their country, and the destroyers of mankind.

L E T T E R I I I.

WE landed at Ostend, and took the route by Ghent to Brussels. This gave us an opportunity of seeing a town, which has occupied an important place in the history of Europe. Ghent, or Gand, possessed in ancient times a population far superior to its present numbers; and was of such extent as to occasion a humorous boast of Charles V., that he could put all Paris in his glove, “dans son Gand.” This town, the capital of Austrian Flanders, was long the seat of commerce in time of peace, and the bulwark of defence in time of war; no place has acquired more military fame, nor been witness to more heroic acts.

The early records of its history report the spirit and intrepidity of the Gantois.

The

The pacification of Ghent forms a great epoch in their history. This was formed in 1576, by a union of the estates for the establishment of their religious and civil privileges, and ratified by Philip II. Famed for revolt and sedition of old, it became again the seat of tumult in 1787. Ghent had till that moment taken no decided part, but the entrance of the Brabanters in military force, joined to the insolence of the Austrian soldiery, drew the citizens to the party of the insurgents, and the Austrian army quitted the place with disgrace. If we may credit the accounts given of this defeat, it redounds infinitely to the discredit of the Austrians, who, to the amount of several thousand disciplined troops, abandoned the town, citadel, and magazine, to the depredations of three or four hundred vagabonds, "flying," as a writer expresses it, "*devant quelques malheureux de la populace, sans chefs, sans armes, and sans culottes.*"

The

The issue of these revolutionary tumults had cast a gloom over the place. It wore the aspect of war, though in a state of actual tranquillity. The majority of its inhabitants seem composed of soldiers and ecclesiastics; and promenades, streets, and avenues were thronged with hussars, priests, and beggars.

The churches are the grand ornament of Ghent, as of every country under the influence of superstition. These sacred edifices are adorned with all that art and riches can contribute to constitute splendour; but what renders them most the object of a traveller's attention is, that they are the grand repositories of the chefs d'œuvres of the Flemish school.

The cathedral of St. Gedele is a magnificent building, and crowded with paintings of the Flemish masters. Though it was passion week, and the priests were constantly upon duty, the altars were not as usual thronged with devotees. The population of a Catholic town may be easily
inferred

inferred from the aspect of its churches at this sacred season. Some few miserable wretches only were to be found engaged in their devotions, and bowing round the deserted shrines. I shall not enter into a detail of the works of the admirable artists which embellish this place, nor attempt to describe the sensations created by them. I suffered my sensibilities to be spontaneously excited, and probably often felt emotions at variance with academical law. Criticism may decree what *ought* to please; but in painting, as in poetry, an appeal will not fail to be made from the understanding to the heart. Shakspeare has charmed, not only *without*, but even *against* rule: and yet the English nation would rather sacrifice the laws that control, and the critics that censure, than yield to oblivion and obscurity one drama of the immortal bard.

A town in the circumstances of Ghent, could not long find amusement for a traveller; the ferocious aspect of the military, whose

whose numbers and discipline are scarcely sufficient to retain in subjection the turbulent malcontents, added to the gloom of evacuated houses and a deserted theatre, induced us to quit Ghent on the following day, and pursue our route to Brussels. I could not leave the town without lamenting the evils which have defaced and depopulated a place, that once possessed such strength, splendour, and opulence. The miseries of unsuccessful revolt are here accumulated upon the head of the laborious and peaceful citizen.

Political grievances when extended to an enormous height demand political reform; and this can, in certain cases, only be effected by popular opposition. That there existed circumstances sufficiently aggravating, and sufficiently oppressive, to warrant the remonstrances preferred by the Brabanters, cannot be disputed. The cabals of his ministers and agents, rather than the disposition of the Emperor, prevented the
equitable

equitable arrangements at first required ; till the spirits of either party became heated, and ineffectual remonstrance was succeeded by outrageous revolt. The knavery and misconduct of those who headed the refractory Belgians, were the causes of those distresses and distractions which afterwards attended them.

The concessions of Leopold are a demonstrative proof of the injustice of Joseph. Had Belgiojoso possessed the conciliating talents of Merci d'Argenteau, the sword probably had never been drawn ; and had there been prudence and patriotism in the leaders of the revolt, had the posts of Vandernoot and Van Eupen been supplied by a Mirabeau and a Fayette, the sword had not been sheathed till Belgic independence had been established.

I have ever commiserated the lot of a country, which by conquest or cession has become the appendage of a great empire. An arbitrary monarch may possess in some

happy moments the feelings of a man, and all that lies within the compass of his own administration comes more or less under his own inspection; but a government by agent, suffragan, or viceroy, is surely a government most formidable to the liberties of a people. How are they to press through that phalanx of ministers, pensioners, and courtiers, which fill up all the avenues of appeal? The distance from the fountain of authority extinguishes hope of redress, and urges them to remedies the most violent and desperate.

L E T T E R IV.

WE find Bruffels invested with the same military terrors, and deformed by the same melancholy rites, as Ghent. That part of the town in which the people of fashion reside, is of modern date; the houses are built of stone, the apartments spacious, and the general aspect of the place is magnificent. The gloomy ceremonies of the holy week have thrown a veil over the usual gaieties of this capital, and interrupt for the present the tide of amusement. Even active occupation is in great part suspended; and the church has supplanted the theatre, the ball-room, and the exchange. The avenues of the cathedral are crowded from morning to night. All ranks and conditions seem unanimous in the celebration of the sacred season.

The

The carnival, which I understand was uncommonly brilliant, has left behind it the memory of some irregularities ; but if the most assiduous and uninterrupted attendance upon the ceremonies of the church can avail, there will not remain a folly to blush for, or a crime to repent of. It is really amusing to see the multitudes that throng around the sacred porticoes, and the ardour of the devotional penance which they discover. Not content with worshipping at one shrine, and making interest with one saint, they fly from altar to altar, seek an interest in every sacrifice, and mingle their devotions with the incense of every order. In England, it is deemed unnecessary for the great to interfere in the services of religion ; fashion and convenience are there paramount to reason and duty ; but here the greatest blend with the meanest in all the services which are called religious, however jealous of rank and superiority in civil and social life.

A card-

A card-party was formed on Friday evening, being the Vendredi Saint, the singular object of which induces me to mention it. It was held at the apartments of the Comtesse de Choiseul, and attended by most of the fashionable people. Agreeably to the law of the assembly, the gains of the evening were to be disposed of, at the discretion of the lady of the house, in purposes of charity. This is a custom of ancient establishment.

An assembly of this nature, where pleasure and religion are combined, must give birth to many singular impressions. No day in the calendar can wear a more gloomy face, or excite more devotional sentiments in the breast of a catholic, than the day of the crucifixion. Every means are employed to excite superstitious horror, and recal to the mind the memory of that darkness which enveloped the face of the earth. All that breathes the air of dissipation must be entirely banished, and amusement so qualified

by motive, and so chastised by austerity, as to receive the serious cast of religious exercise. To-morrow is, I understand, the concluding day of this severe penance: consolation will then be administered to the consciences of the devotees, who will emerge, fully acquitted of all past guilt, and at liberty to commence a fresh account. The streets, parade, and promenades will resume their brilliancy: at present, they exhibit a striking picture of spiritual indolence. Superstition has long since consecrated this week to purposes which are deemed incompatible with secular occupation. The days being too sacred for labour, and too long for devotion, a great part of time is yawned away in listless *ennui*.

The consecration of days* is a custom of barbarous origin; and the pious enthusiasm of the first christians gave it the sanction of their own observance. The church of Eng-

* This is only to be understood in reference to days consecrated to particular persons.

land, which has had the merit of restoring to society the days and weeks hallowed by bigotry, still retains some few, which she refuses to secularize, and which serve, like the ancient hangings in a modernized mansion, to mark the date of the edifice, and perpetuate the taste of those who undertook its reform. It is plain, the contract between priest and people in those regions of superstition, is very much in favour of the former, though equally to the satisfaction of each. The latter surrender without reluctance the fruits of their labour to the use of the former, who only engage for an undefined retribution—a bright reversion in the sky—at some future and distant period.

L E T T E R V.

Brussels, April 24, 1791.

I AM just returned from assisting at a ceremony, in which I appeared to myself to make no very respectable figure. A proclamation, posted in a public spot near the Hotel de Ville, announced the return of a celebrity, in which all pious catholics take great interest, and from which, agreeably to the tenor of the advertisement, every devout christian might derive great advantage. It was the celebration of an event most important to the cause of religion, in the preservation of the Image of the Virgin Mary, from the anti-catholic zeal of the reformers of Scotland. The attachment of her friends induced them to hazard much for her safety. They fled beyond sea with her, and after a
thousand

thousand miracles, and experiencing numerous vicissitudes, “ per varios fluctus et “ tot discrimina rerum,” they auspiciously reached Brussels. Many honours were paid her upon her arrival on the Continent, and particularly at the ceremony of her solemn reception among the Augustine monks. Successive popes concurred in granting plenary pardons to all who would commemorate the anniversary of her happy deliverance. The Image was placed in the centre of the church, and illuminated with numberless tapers. High mass was sung, to which succeeded a variety of religious *divertisements*, intended to represent the *hair-breadth escapes* the Virgin had experienced, and the efficacy which this wonderful Image still possessed. All seemed eager to croud around her, and some never quitted her feet. A splendid procession concluded the service: and the holy fathers chaunted their lays, preceded by all kinds of mysterious insignia, from their own to the church of St. Gede.

As I was not so deeply interested in the ceremonies as the rest of the congregation, I had more leisure to comment on the drama. The devotion of the people was unquestionably sincere. They bowed, and prostrated themselves, with an energy and fervour, which indicated the most unsuspicious faith in her more than magnetical virtue. I observed several walking round the shrine, and bowing with the utmost inconvenience to themselves, lest they should accidentally turn their backs upon her. As I had disposed myself in the middle of the aisle, the procession passed me, and gave me an opportunity of admiring the happy influence of a religious life upon these holy fathers, who seemed to have profited much from the residence of the Virgin among them. Countenances more expressive of pleasure and festivity could not be found, even in the paradise of Mahomet. It was not a little surprising to see so great a multitude assisting at those services, considering the recent

recent penance performed in the holy week.

It should seem that the people of Brussels must be desperate sinners, or exemplary saints. The quantum of holiness, including all the beads that are counted, and the *Ave-Marias* that are said, bears certainly, if any allowance be made for human frailty, more than a just proportion to the ordinary *quantum* of sin. But here mankind are persuaded that none of those pious duties will be lost. When sufficient has been done to cancel their own crimes, all super-numerary acts become a sort of clear gain, which rests entirely at their own disposal. The canons of the church allow the transfer of this, with the same ease as any other species of alienable property. If a man die intestate, it naturally reverts to the church, and becomes a part of the ecclesiastical fund. This commerce, in past ages so productive to the proprietors, has suffered considerably in its revenues. A great

part of Europe, however, continues piously attached to the old traffic, and multitudes yet sacrifice solid possessions for this imaginary property; convinced, it should seem, that the exchange is decidedly in their favour.

L E T T E R VI.

Brussels, April 27, 1791.

THE gloom is dissipated, the curtain is drawn up, and the gay orgies of pleasure succeed to the melancholy solemnities of penance. The theatre is opened, the artificers resume their occupations, and the circles of the fashionable world their amusements. If I read aright the countenances of those who are emerged from religious austerities to pleasurable relaxation, they are not a little gratified by the change. The torrent of festivity, which is now opened, appears

appears to insinuate, that religious austerity has had its effect; that its devout subjects have amply cancelled all past guilt, and made, as it were, Heaven their creditor for future sins.

The theatre is under very bad management. The edifice itself is sufficiently large and commodious, but the scenery and the performers are much below mediocrity; though the enormous price paid for the boxes, which are engaged by particular persons, brings in a revenue fully adequate to its support. The society here is numerous and brilliant; regular evenings are appropriated to those ladies who lead the *ton*.

In addition to those which are established, and of ordinary recurrence, concerts and dances are occasionally given. An introduction once effected, and the regular ceremonies of etiquette performed, the whole field of amusement is opened, and wherever you hear mention of festivities, you are at liberty to participate them. The

Comtesse de Choiseul is at the head of these parties ; at a very advanced period of life, she possesses sound health and hilarity of spirits. The duties and the pleasures of life occupy the whole of her attention, and her time is divided between amusement and devotion. The dignity of her age and station, and the courtesyness of her manners, give her the highest importance in the fashionable assemblies.

The modern champion of chivalry has expressed in terms of brilliant lamentation, his sorrow for the extinction of the ancient gallantry of France. But this I assure you, that, however expatriated, and rooted from its native soil, gallantry flourishes here with increasing vigour : and in no part of Europe, perhaps, is the empire of the fair sex so firmly established. All who would move in the sphere of polite life, must pass the ordeal of female scrutiny.

The " Ladies club," is by far the most brilliant society here, and this club disposes
of

of the fates of every stranger, who solicits a part in the amusements of the place. The ladies who compose it have their regular times of meeting, and of settling business. The stranger who sues for initiation must in due form be proposed; and, under the direction of the lady president, the club proceeds to a ballot. Nor is this always an ineffective form.

The club gave a ball lately at the hotel "Prince de Galles." Each female member has the privilege of introducing a gentleman for the evening, and it was in virtue of this privilege that I obtained admittance. The company were numerous, and exhibited a splendid show of beauty and rank. The greater part was formed by the fugitive noblesse of France. Here were rallied the scattered members of the dis-embodied phalanx; and, in defiance of decrees and spoliations, gave brilliancy and hilarity to the assembly.

L E T T E R VII.

Brussels, May 1, 1791.

POLITENESS is a term with all mankind of familiar and continual use; all suppose they understand it; and to request a definition, would be to offer an affront. I had an opportunity a few evenings past, of seeing it exemplified, at least in a manner very entertaining, by the Marquis de——, who has lately purchased an estate in the vicinity of Brussels, upon the excellence of which, he was enlarging to some English ladies—the convenience of his house, and the elegance of his gardens, in which he had exactly copied the English stile. He had stored his cellars with excellent wine, and nothing was wanting to his felicity, but the honour of their opinion upon the taste and execution

execution of the whole. The ladies gave him to understand, that his description had so fascinated them, that they would certainly not lose so fair an opportunity of being amused.

This was what the Marquis neither intended nor expected, yet the embarrassment caused no visible interruption of his conversation. Nothing could indeed charm him more than the honour the ladies intended him, but he must not at the same time neglect to inform them that his house had suffered considerably in the late tumults—his ground had been ravaged—his plantations destroyed—his cellars robbed—and, in a word, such disorders committed, that the present situation of his villa would not recompense the ladies for the trouble they would be at in visiting him; and, concluding with a turn of pleasantry and a handsome bow, left the room with an air “*par faitement bien.*”

I was

I was forcibly struck by the *addresse* with which the Marquis extricated himself from this delicate distress, without any symptom of alarm, or violation of gallantry. His advance and retreat were equally finished in their kind; and we were compelled to acknowledge, that no man could make an offer with more politeness, than a Frenchman; and no man could relieve himself from the pain of fulfilling it, with a better grace.

L E T T E R VIII.

Brussels, April 29, 1791.

THERE is a philosophy which can triumph over the accidents of life, which can smile in the face of the most calamitous events, and blunt the shafts of the most adverse fortune. It is the philosophy of the heart, and has no connection with the fabricated systems of the schools. No nation upon earth exemplify so strongly the truth

truth of this maxim, nor give such evidence of the operation of its principle, as the French. Expelled a country which gave them birth—divested of all that gave them importance—stript of their hereditary honours and patrimonial fortunes, they retain what gold or titles could never give, and what no decree can take away, “ *la gaieté de cœur.*” Bruffels, at this moment, proves an asylum to almost all the expatriated noblesse of France. Every hour announces some new arrival, and hotels and promenades are thronged to excess.

The accumulated evils which pursue these splendid fugitives, the fatal dislodgment they have experienced from the seats which their ancestors had occupied for ages, and which the sanction of government, the prescription of time, and the temper of their vassals, seemed to augur eternal, would be sufficient to depress a people less insensible of calamity. The morning is however occupied in councils, the evening in cards; the pres-

sing exigencies of business have not weakened in them the thirst of pleasure; though plots, assassinations; and all the horrid machinations of defeated aristocracy fill the hours of cabal, they find no place in the circles of society. Counter revolutions fall before "*La bagatelle*." No plots are agitated beyond intrigue; and no assassinations meditated but of time and spleen.

No man who mixes with the evening parties would imagine that the countenances he beholds on those occasions, are worn by men who are bankrupts in fortune and in title. The charms of song, the movements of the dance, and the evolutions of Faro equally interest the whole: the same gesture, the same volubility, the same enchanting vivacity animate the assemblies, that prevailed in days of better fortune.

The most vigilant observer would not discover a moment in which the memory of annihilated grandeur induces a transient gloom. If reports transpire of any new
patriotic

patriotic ravages, an involuntary sigh escapes, which is instantly replaced by returning gaiety; and neither air nor feature are suffered to betray the most distant symptoms of dejection or despair. An Englishman in similar circumstances would fly for refuge to solitude, perhaps to suicide.

The character of a Frenchman is to be found in his language. A *moderate* man can scarcely satisfy himself with the terms suited to the temper of his mind. All is exaggerated and excessive. If you attempt to be natural, you will yet be figurative; and can scarcely make yourself comprehended, without a metaphor.

Such is the tone of this language, that praise and blame, pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, admit of no mediums. *Charmant* and *superbe* is the least you can say of what is recommended to your approbation: if you say less than *vilaine* of what you dislike, you will be deemed phlegmatic;—if you are pleased, you must be *ravi*;—if you are
D vexed,

vexed, you must be *desolé*;—if you are not in extacies, you must be *au desespoir*. All these you may heighten by a thousand arts, and you will do the language very little justice without these augmentatives. If *charmant* is not sufficient, repeat it, and you will talk more like a Frenchman. There are a million little prefixes which you may employ to great advantage, *très, fort, infiniment*, &c. which serve to colour your sensations, and raise your expressions as far beyond nature as imagination extends.

The genius of the people accords exactly with their language. The most lively sorrow or rapturous joy is excited by the most trivial incident: but lively sensations, like vivid colours, are not made for permanence. Thus the man endued with this temper of mind, will triumph over all the efforts of malice or misfortune. He is possessed of resources, which will illumine the darkest scenes of misery. He will combat with undiminished confidence, though thousands fall; and continue to hope, where all others would despair.

L E T T E R IX.

Brussels, April 30, 1791.

NATIONAL varieties form the grand source of entertainment to a traveller: nor is it of consequence to him, whether the manners and customs of the people he visits, claim any manifest superiority over those of his own country; it is sufficient for the purposes of his curiosity that they *differ*. Novelty is the charm which commends them to his attention, and the merit of the difference is a subject of subsequent reflection.

A celebrated moral philosopher has assigned three laws for the government of man, and as the rules of human conduct—the law of honour, the law of the land, and the divine law. These are certainly very competent to the decision of any question

in morals, but had he chosen to have been more universal, he might have added a fourth law—I mean, the law of etiquette; for the law of honour, in which some might suppose it included, only prohibits the perpetration of any act which would degrade the gentleman, or interrupt the offices of social harmony. This, therefore, applies only to the more prominent parts of conduct, and those actions which border upon morality. The law of etiquette confines itself wholly to those minutiae of deportment, which have as little connection with morals as with physics. A word, a look, or a motion, contrary to etiquette, fixes upon you the stain of culpability. And then, though you had observed the other three with the spirit of a man, the fidelity of a citizen, and the virtue of a saint; you would stand no fairer chance of maintaining your rank in polished society, than a Hottentot. And so various are the character and sentiments of the people of different countries, that a man
might

might as well attempt to find the reasonings of Newton in the system of Des Cartes, and deduce the doctrines of the Koran from the writings of Voltaire, as to determine from the general principles of politesse the maxims of national etiquette.

I was led to these reflections by a circumstance which took place the evening of the ball given by the ladies club. An English gentleman, who had been introduced as a stranger, and whose ignorance of French etiquette might seem to plead his excuse, was actually observed holding conversation with his partner when the dance was ended. Had she been a married lady, this would have attracted no notice. The circumstance would have been imputed to gallantry, or intrigue, in either of which cases, the lady is subject to no authority, and the gentleman responsible to no tribunal—but that of her husband. *He* is in all probability engaged in too many similar intrigues, to find leisure for so irksome a business. Thus a *tête-a-tête* of this nature would neither have been

deemed criminal nor dangerous. But the lady was *unmarried*, and the extraordinary conduct of the gentleman was referred to the sudden influence of a soft attachment. The eyes of the company were upon him. “*Le pauvre homme! il est amoureux,*” was circulated in whispers. This sudden passion filled up the chasm of conversation in the morning circles; and my friend, who had hitherto continued unsuspicious, was surprised the following evening, by finding the eyes of the company pointedly fixed upon him. He received with astonishment the congratulations of some, the condolences of others, and the assurances of all—that he was really in love. It was in vain that he denied the charge, and persisted against the existence of the passion; it was in vain that he urged the shortness of the conversation, and the innocence of its object; all were unanimous in deciding against him: and it was resolved *nem. con.* that when a gentleman holds conversation with an unmarried

married lady, love must be either the cause or the consequence.

I should perhaps intreat your indulgence, when I record those trivial details. But though the bold and prominent lines of character are to be found in acts of higher importance; though heroism is most successfully traced in the field, and sagacity in the cabinet; manners are only to be deciphered in the lesser incidents of social-intercourse. It is the zephyr and the shower which disclose the foliage of the rose or the myrtle, though storms and tempests may be necessary to prove the strength of the oak or the cedar.

L E T T E R X.

THE park at Brussels is a very charming promenade. The walks are indeed for the most part straight, cutting each other at right angles, and ornamented with statues. There are, however, some varieties in those walks, not usual in continental gardens.

The buildings which face the park on each side, appear very magnificent from the different avenues. In addition to the amusement of walking, you may retire into some rooms, which are to be found in the recesses of the gardens, to drink *coffee, liqueurs, &c.* and read the papers of the day. The fashionable people are to be seen upon the walks usually from twelve to one, and mixed ranks of people in great numbers promenade here in the evening.

I have been to visit a place in the environs of Brussels, which is esteemed one of the most striking beauties of the vicinity; it is the palace of the arch-duchess, and built of a beautiful stone. It merits well the eulogium that has been passed upon it. The apartments are large and well finished, and the situation commands a very charming and extensive prospect. The grounds are, agreeable to the reigning fashion on the continent, laid out à l'Angloise, and discover

cover some taste. The furniture of the Palace, which is said to be uncommonly elegant, was removed, in consequence of the outrages committed during the late troubles. It is now about to be replaced, and the arch-duchess is daily expected to resume her court at Brussels.

All the accounts I have received here, respecting the *dernier coup* of the revolutionists, are filled with the tragical horrors experienced by the inhabitants of Brussels and its environs. Public men and public measures were at first the sole objects of the popular indignation; but upon the ill success of the Brabanters, and the triumphs of the Austrians, the face of affairs changed, and private property fell a sacrifice to the madness of the multitude. Abandoned by their leaders and pursued by their enemies, these unhappy wretches formed the desperate resolution of restoring their ruined hopes and fortunes by a general pillage. The ravages committed on this occasion

were

were unparalleled in number and enormity. Not bounding their insolence to the public roads and streets, they entered private houses, and committed all the outrageous acts of an unprincipled banditti. The entrance of the Austrian troops terminated those depredations; and restored to the disordered town the appearance of tranquillity.—I say, *the appearance*, for I cannot reconcile myself to the aspect of a place in the situation of Brussels at this moment. The stern countenances of the huzzars, who are stationed in all possible avenues—who eye all our motions with the most savage jealousy—and who are authorized to fire upon us at their discretion, strike me with a horror which I should scarcely have felt in the tumults which preceded their entrance.

The disorders of a mob are hideous, yet if property is to be secured at the expence of liberty, and personal safety to be bartered for general protection, I cannot conceive
the

the situation greatly meliorated. For my own part, I can as easily imagine misery to prevail in a free government, as enjoyment to exist under the control of military law.

L E T T E R XI.

Brussels, May 2, 1791.

O UR resolution is formed for quitting Brussels to-morrow, and entering upon the tour of Holland. I leave with regret this court of amusement, though the objects which lie before me most warmly interest my curiosity. A traveller should not long rest at one place. He may reside with safety the period necessary for observation; but if he pass that limit, curiosity ripens into attachment: he strikes his roots into the soil, and is not torn away without reluctance. A longer residence at Brussels might produce this effect.

If

If I have framed just sentiments of the character of a modern Fleming, this people have suffered considerable degeneracy. In the higher ranks of life, the intercourse of nations has very much assimilated the external characters of men, and the genuine traits of nature are only to be developed, where neither force nor fashion have been employed to new-model or refine.

The opinions which I have established, from my best investigation, are very disadvantageous to the present race. The most prominent features in their character are ignorance, dulness, and obstinacy. A more provoking trio of evil properties cannot be imagined. It was our misfortune, in more than one instance, to be the victims of them. In the high road between Ghent and Brussels, we escaped by a miracle, from the accidental fracture of the shaft of the carriage, the consequences of an overthrow. The alarm occasioned by this catastrophe soon brought around us
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the boors of the adjoining village, who, with folded arms and vacant countenances, encircled the chaise, offering no assistance, and talking, as if each were emulous to out-croak his fellow in their horrid guttural jargon. At length the arrival of the post-master was announced. Scraps of cordage were immediately employed, and this expert veteran, having ended his job, bade the postilion lead forward. “ Allez,” said he, and turning to me, “ Soyez tranquilles “ messieurs—tout ira bien, vous ne risquerez “ rien ; J’en reponds.” These words were scarcely uttered, when every knot gave up its hold, with an explosion which induced us to dismount with all convenient speed ; the carriage was then dragged to the nearest town, and put into the hands of a professed artificer. It was difficult, among the multitude of workmen, to distinguish who was principal, not fewer than fifteen or twenty being employed in this paltry business. We soon perceived that this Herculean task surpassed

their talents, and urged to them the inefficiency of their contrivances ; but our advice and directions were treated with equal contempt, and the consequence was, that the shaft broke from its hold before we had lost sight of the town.

The inhabitants of the Belgic provinces were always a brave and a hardy people, but never famed for quickness or penetration. The pillars of their fame are monuments rather of industry than of genius. They have acquired the praise of agricultural skill, for the patient labour which they bestowed upon the improvement of their marshy lands. Their tapestries were the admiration of Europe, before the reign of good taste commenced ; and if their school of painters be excepted, they have, I believe, little else to boast. As to their moral qualities, they rank, if possible, still lower than their intellectual. Imposition and extortion circumvent you on all sides—no vigilance of your own will avail
you ;

you; and no magistrate will attend to your complaint. Against fraud and dishonesty there are no laws, or the laws have no energy. You even frequently become the victim of rapacity to the very organ of justice; and the man whom you would punish, is the judge to whom you must appeal.

L E T T E R XII.

Spa, May 17, 1791.

THE scenes which have intervened since my last, are so numerous, and their succession so rapid, that I seem to have made a visionary journey. In thirteen days we have described a course which might well have occupied thrice the number. Our route lay by Antwerp, where we passed the first day after quitting Brussels. No town has been more celebrated for its splendour and its importance than

Antwerp. Entering it with expectations raised to no common height, my disappointment was proportionably severe. Its buildings are, indeed, formed upon a bold model, and exhibit fine specimens of ancient architecture.

The church of Nôtre Dame is a cabinet of rare workmanship and exquisite paintings. It has not the polished elegance of St. Bavon at Ghent, but it is in my opinion more majestic and venerable. The grand altar piece by Rubens, however, made me regard all other objects with comparative indifference. This celebrated painting is a descent from the cross, and possesses an energy, a beauty, and an expression, which entitle it to rank with the first productions of this master. I believe it is generally allowed of this painting, that it has the united excellencies of design and colouring in a very eminent degree, and connoisseurs give it a place in the highest class of crucifixion pieces.

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The churches and convents are so numerous at Antwerp, that no one but an amateur of the fine arts, of the most exhaustless patience, could attend to a particular investigation of the whole. For my own part, I could scarcely resolve upon undertaking the routine, such a melancholy aspect clouded the face of every thing—the streets appeared depopulated—the best houses cleared of the inhabitants—neither the bustle of trade, nor the rattle of amusement, were to be heard. The channel of commerce has been diverted, and pleasure flown to other climes: six thousand Austrian troops were in possession of this town, the fanaticism and violence of which made so conspicuous a figure in the late Belgic revolution. Though Leopold's clemency passed an act of amnesty and oblivion, numbers refused to return, either from obstinacy or distrust.

We went to the theatre in the evening, which exhibited a melancholy picture of
E desertion.

desertion. The only amusement which attracts at present, is derived from the evolutions of the parade, which are performed in the Place de Mer. Here you may observe a motley assemblage, of which Abbés compose the greater part, ranged on the several sides, and with folded arms seeking some occupation for the heavy hours. Scarcely any provisions are to be purchased in the town, and the small market which has survived holds up a price beyond the capacities of all but the rich.

The storm, though hushed, is not dissipated. Many unquiet spirits remain, whom neither force nor favour have yet subdued. Secret combinations still exist; the cap of liberty is occasionally exhibited, and the name of VANDERNOODT devoutly invoked. A convivial meeting had, some few evenings past, expanded the hearts of some old rebels; and the orgies of Bacchus having rekindled the flames of freedom, this folly of intemperance was not terminated
without

without the intervention of the military. Dangers more serious may be apprehended from the ambition of the Prussian court, which will doubtless lose no opportunity of re-animating the Belgic discontents; nor is it quite clear that the House of Orange will hold itself bound by the faith of the last treaty to continue neuter.

The manœuvres of the House of Brandenburg are generally known in the late revolution, and the negotiations of Vandernoodt with the House of Orange have not lost their impresson. The fate of Belgia is not yet decided, and Leopold holds on a very unsure tenure this part of his dominions.

The general temper of the people may be inferred from the general aspect of the country, in which nothing is to be read but dejection or discontent. Were the overtures of the Emperor cordially embraced, cheerfulness would have relumined the countenance; industry and amusement would have been prosecuted as usual, and

every thing ere now have recovered its tone. But, when all stagnates—when trade has no vigour, and pleasure no attraction—a just foundation exists for suspicion, that the wound is not yet healed ; — that though quelled by terror, the spirit of sedition yet rages in secret ; and only wants a favourable moment for breaking forth with aggravated fury.

L E T T E R XIII.

ANTWERP is one among those numerous cities which have experienced the vicissitudes of fortune. For near two centuries it astonished Europe by the magnitude of its riches, and the extent of its commerce. Equally celebrated for the arts of war and peace, it sustained with firmness the attacks of its enemies. The obstinate resistance made by this city to the Duke of Parma, and the ten months siege

it sustained in 1585, form a very honourable part of its history. In common with the other Belgic towns, it has repeatedly changed its masters, and been repeatedly the subject of war and pillage. Rubens and Vandyke, Cramage, Plantin, and Muretus, are among the number of those who have distinguished Antwerp as a mother of the fine arts, and a nurse of literature.

Weakened by successive assaults from its neighbours, and its tyrants, Antwerp experienced its last and most decisive blow from the Hollanders, by the treaty of Munster. This treaty, consigning to Holland the exclusive navigation of the Scheld, cut off the resources of commercial wealth, and precipitated the declining grandeur of this ancient city, the gloomy and deserted edifices of which still remain the monuments of its past splendour. One *trait* which ever distinguished this city, is still to be found in its decayed and fallen state. Fanaticism has suffered no diminution, nor

have any of those rude assaults which subverted its wealth and its commerce, weakened or impaired its rooted attachment to the Catholic faith.

No place in Europe is so immediately under the influence of every religious absurdity. All the long series of monkish iniquities has not convinced these people of the possibility of error in ecclesiastics; and their consciences, their faith, and their purses, are still at the disposal of priests and prelates. The late revolution owed much of its energy to the religious prejudices of this deluded people; and Antwerp and Malines discovered the genuine fury of fanaticism. The notorious Van Eupen, who acted so principal a part in that political drama, was originally a canon of this place; and if we may credit the intelligence received in those parts, and the universal tone of the writings of that time, his history is not greatly to the credit of ecclesiastical purity. In the capacity of Grand

Penitentiary, to which he was exalted by the liberal patronage of the Bishop of Antwerp, his province comprehended all spiritual jurisdiction over the numerous inhabitants of this great see. All cases of conscience, doubts of faith, and religious embarrassments, came under his review, and were determined by his decisions. The duties of his office introduced him into the closets of all, and the illapses of the spirit were sometimes made subservient to the impulses of the flesh. * * * * *

Such was the man who moved the principal springs in those tumults, which so lately shook the Belgic states. Vandernoodt, though foremost in name, was but the organ of this arch-politician ; who, expatriated by crimes which insult heaven and earth, had no hope of recovering his forfeited fortunes, but by entering his country sword in hand. To compass his re-establishment, he practised all the arts of political hypocrisy. He is naturally cool, subtle, and enterprising—

under the garb of sanctity, he has a heart capable of any crime. Patriotism was the lure he held out, and by his address he contrived to obtain credit, till he was detected in embroiling, by insidious artifices, the several parties of the state; aspersing by his emissaries the intentions of those, who from principle espoused the cause of the Belgians—covering with the mantle of religion the machinations of rebellion;—and labouring to establish the empire of the church and the noblesse, upon the blended ruins of imperial authority and democratic freedom. The conciliatory measures of Leopold were very ill calculated to serve the ends of this arch-hypocrite. He therefore employed every sinister engine to prevent a union. The reconciliation which took place between the contending parties defeated his designs of personal aggrandizement, and compelled him to fly from justice into some distant clime, where his hypocrisy may hereafter play a more successful game upon the credulity of mankind.

L E T T E R XIV.

WE took the route by Breda into Holland, and for a few leagues rolled along a good *pavée*, and then entered upon a road, which, had we not actually passed it, might very fairly have been deemed impassable. A deep sand formed the soil, elevated into mounds on one side, sunk into hollow pits on the other, and in many places completely buried in water of considerable extent; every step the horses took required great exertion, and their utmost efforts could never accelerate them beyond a footpace. It was near ten o'clock when we entered Breda, and it was fortunate for us that the gates do not finally close before that time.

All the country between Antwerp and Breda, for many miles, exhibits a melancholy

choly scene—vast wilds and deserts which seem to defy the hand of culture, and upon which the most laborious industry would operate in vain. The lateness of the evening concealed from our view the change of country which takes place as you approach Breda, which is a neat and well fortified town.

We experienced a very striking change in every object around us; the houses and streets had neither the awkwardness nor the filthiness of the Brabant towns. An air of ease, vivacity, and content pervaded the countenances of all—the soldiers wore a less hostile aspect—neither folded arms nor sauntering paces were to be seen; activity, vigour, and industry seemed to prevail; and each appeared emulous to perform the duties of his occupation.

Breda may claim no inconsiderable merit from the public places which adorn it. The palace of the Prince of Orange is delightfully situated, and the gardens which surround

round it are a great ornament to the town. The church of the Protestants is a very noble edifice—it is hung with escutcheons, which diffuse a gloom around the sacred walls, and are but an indifferent succedaneum to the masterly paintings which fill the Romish churches. The monuments which are raised against the walls in the English churches oftener deface than adorn the buildings; but the numerous escutcheons which invest the walls of the best churches in Holland give them more the air of mausoleums, than of places of worship. There is a very ancient tomb of marble in one of the recesses, now crumbling into ruins. What remains is however a curious monument of early taste and primitive sculpture.

Breda was distinguished as the headquarters of the late revolutionary intrigues. It was here that the first committee was formed under the joint conduct of Vander-noodt

noodt and Van Eupen. This committee, at which the factious nobles of Brabant attended, declared Vander-Mersch general of the troops which they resolved to raise; and published a manifesto, dated at Hoogstraten, in the name of the people of Brabant. This manifesto was, by a decree of the Austrian government, destroyed at Brussels, and several members of the secret committee taken into custody. Three thousand insurgents upon this attacked and captured the forts of Lillo and Liefhenshoek. This was the first blow struck by them, and the government distracted by internal divisions now lost all energy. The defeat of Chroeder at Turnhout soon followed, which gave spirit to the revolutionists, and excited the highest alarm at the court of Brussels. The entry of the rebels into Ghent, and the dishonourable retreat of D'Arbers with his four thousand troops, gave to the revolution a force and a respecta-

respectability, which proselyted those who, averse to its principle, would yet profit from its success.

The impolitic measure of concluding an armistice at Tirlemont by D'Alton, at the head of an army fully competent to annihilate the rebels, was the finishing stroke of this ill-judging infatuated ministry. The armistice opened a channel for communication between the regular troops and the vagrant rebels; and the glow of patriotism being thus disseminated, not less than 500 men deserted at once--filling the air with the most outrageous shouts of liberty and revolution. These were of the regiment of Murray; their example operated upon others--desertions took place from all quarters, and every part of Brussels resounded with the popular cry of "Vivent les Patriotes! Au Diable les Royalistes!" This was shortly after succeeded by the departure of the Austrian troops from Brussels, which Vandernoodt on the 18th December

cember 1789 entered with all the triumphal honours of a proud victor; was hailed with the loudest acclamations as the subverter of tyranny, and the author of Belgic independence.

I must entreat your pardon for the frequent reflections with which I trouble you on the Belgic affairs. Every part of Brabant bears the vestiges of the late commotions, and interests by its melancholy aspect our pity and indignation. The court of Berlin had doubtless some objects of profound policy to compass in fomenting the discontents of the Belgians against the Austrian government. The transfer of the Belgic provinces to the Prussian sovereignty would have furnished that power with a vast ascendant, and enabled it to assume a tone with the Emperor very much to the advantage of its authority. Holland, ever attentive to the main point, contemplated with a feeling beyond indifference the apprehended disunion of the Belgic states from the Austrian government---

ment—regardless who sways the sceptre, provided they occupy the market, these prudent speculators promised themselves an augmentation of their commercial advantages. This is the notorious object of Dutch intrigue, and their neighbours, who experience its effects, were not at a loss to account for the secret fuel added to the flames of rebellion. “Le seul avantage
“ qu’ils en veulent tirer,” said the Brabanters; “c’est de vendre aux Belges
“ de mauvaises munitions a très-haut
“ prix.”

L E T T E R X V .

HOLLAND is certainly a very convenient country to travel through, provided a man will make up his mind to dispense with the splendour of equipage. All the roads which communicate with its environs are intolerably bad, but a carriage of the country will roll over them without difficulty, yet not always without alarm to the traveller. Had we availed ourselves of the precaution given before we quitted Brussels, of leaving our carriage at Antwerp, we should have experienced less difficulty in passing the moor between that place and Breda. The grand advantage in making the tour of Holland arises from the canals which pierce the country, and form an agreeable mode of communication between the several places.

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We had been led into an error by the instructions furnished us at Breda, and had entered a vessel for Rotterdam, which we soon found ill-adapted for the conveyance of passengers. Our situation in it became irksome—the vessel was dirty—the cabin filled with children. The air without was extremely cold, and the Captain could only reply to our complaints in a language we did not understand. These disagreeables, added to the apprehensions of a long passage, the wind blowing hard and contrary, induced us to form a resolution of abandoning the vessel the first opportunity, and trying our fortune by land.

Shortly after our forming this determination the vessel came to a mooring in the vicinity of some few houses, from which we promised ourselves information respecting the route to Rotterdam by land. We disembarked, to reconnoitre; and after many fruitless experiments, had the good fortune to discover a school-master, who understanding French, acquainted

quainted us with the particulars which we wished to learn.

Instructed by him that we could procure a cabriolet in the adjacent village, we returned to the vessel, in order to settle with our Captain. It was a work of no small difficulty to make him comprehend our intentions. We endeavoured, by signs, to testify that we were completely *ennuied* of this mode of travelling. Every motion we made embarrassed him, till paying him the whole fare of our passage, we threw our luggage over our shoulders, and left him to meditate on the singularity of our conduct, at which he had little reason to repine. By the good offices of the village school-master we obtained a carriage, and traversed upon a wretched road, through the most wild, swampy, and desert country, for more than a league and a half. In our driver we had the first picture of a real Dutchman. In his figure he was short, with broad hips, and spherical shoulders: his features were sharp,

yet steady—a two-inch pipe issued from his mouth, and completed his profile.

One of the *agrémens* of travelling in these cabriolets, which are the only carriages that can run over the heavy roads, is, that if the wind should set against you, it always comes strongly impregnated with tobacco. It was our fate, whenever we travelled in those carriages, to receive the incense which those amateurs of the pipe are constantly offering to those who sit behind them. Our situation reminded me of the inhabitants of the upper regions, who are usually represented as riding in cabriolets, invested with circumambient clouds.

By eight o'clock in the evening, we arrived at the extreme limit of our journey by land. Mynheer transferred us to the *commissaire*, who was to answer for our conveyance over the Biesbock, usually stiled the Moerdyke. There are no harlequins in Holland. There may be such a thing as *dispatch*, in the warehouses and manufactures; but I question if the language con-

tains an expression synonymous to the English word *haste*.

All I mean by this, is, that though the evening was so far advanced, and we had so much water to cross, these steady-pacing wights would not accelerate their movements in arranging the few preliminaries necessary to embarkation. At length we entered the boat, and caught a breeze, which continued in our favour but a short time; then veered and blew a head, and in the third and last place sunk into a dead calm. Night had now thrown a gloomy veil over heaven and earth—a pale and ill-formed moon afforded a few faint glimmerings, which opened our eyes to the tracks which furrounded us. A mighty waste of water, whose boundaries were only to be discerned on one side, presented a most chilling scene; and the desolate swamps, which furrounded it, scarcely wore a less melancholy aspect. A man and a boy were all who composed the crew of the vessel conveying us over this

melancholy lake. We were barbarians to each other : we could neither animate them to activity, nor question them of our danger. How often have I deplored in my tour through this country, the fatal ambition of those proud architects, who, by their rash designs upon heaven, provoked the division of tongues, and the annihilation of universal language.

Not to aggravate our perils by water, I shall remark that all was perfectly calm—that, if you except the extreme cold that prevailed, the little prospect of coming to an anchor in any reasonable time, the apprehension natural to a situation of the most dreary description, at the mercy, and under the direction of two strangers, whom we could neither soften by promises, nor alarm by threats ; if you except these, and some trifling concomitant inconveniences, we encountered no evil of moment. But I must tell you, that our perils, which appeared at their zenith on the water, were considerably

augmented when we gained the land ; for, wearied with their exertions, our conductors brought us to a mooring, which suited their convenience, but was very little to our accommodation. No vestige of a house, or habitable spot, appeared. Our guides pointed to us that we were to use our feet ; and one preceding, and one bringing up the rear, we traversed a region of the most doleful appearance. Like the fiend that bewilders the lorn traveller, our pilot carried us over marshes and fens, where we could with difficulty find ground sufficiently firm to bear our feet.

The facility with which our leader surmounted those embarrassments, was an aggravation of our distress. It was important to our safety that we kept close : we could not check him, because we could not explain ; and some part of the track over which he hurried us, was piled into heaps of swashy clay, and, at numerous intervals, divided by streams that broke from the adjoining

joining canal. At length a gleam of light darted upon us, and pressing with anxious exertion we arrived at a *cabaret*, where it was destined we should pass the remainder of the night.

If you tell me that I have drawn a melancholy picture of these pigmy perils, I assure you that they appeared to us in gigantic forms. Though I guarded you against the expectation of prodigious events, I did not intend to encounter danger, or combat terrors, without making you a party in our adventures. If it suit the mournful temper of your soul, you may commiserate our painful sensations. If, on the contrary, this finds you in the moment of gaiety, you are welcome to laugh at our embarrassments, provided you triumph in our success,

L E T T E R XVI.

THE Dutch are represented as very trickish and imposing. This character applies in the great towns, but I have a better opinion of the villagers. They have all the marks of honesty, and certainly all the *agrémens* of cleanliness. An old woman opened the door to us, after having satisfied herself by questions to our guides of our good intentions. She conducted us into a chamber, which, from its situation, I should rather style a cellar. We were thoroughly wetted by, what an Hibernian alone would call, our land expedition; and a very few signs made the old matron comprehend that we wished for a fire, which, by her industrious attentions, soon blazed before us.

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She then opened, what appeared to us, a cupboard-door, full three feet from the ground;—when a voice from within addressed us in French. We held a short dialogue, in which the invisible person engaged to furnish us a carriage in the morning, when, wishing us a good night, the old woman closed the door upon him.

The Dutch are very industrious, and rise very early—men of all ranks drink coffee in great abundance. The labourers sip their coffee before they go out to their toils, and appear to eat very little. This may, in all probability, be owing to the quantities of spirits which they are accustomed to swallow. I have repeatedly seen the most robust men taking their morning's meal, previous to the fatigues of the field, and this has consisted in two or three cups of weak coffee, a glass or two of Hollands—then the pipe is kindled, and with *one*, scarcely square inch of bread, these laborious hinds are equipped for the most sturdy services. Our old hostess had
kindled

kindled a fire, and boiled our coffee by five o'clock; and notwithstanding the late hour at which we entered, all were up and active, and by six o'clock we were seated in a cabriolet, and took leave of this curious company.

A great change of scenery takes place as you proceed to Rotterdam. The country is still open, but less deformed with wild wastes, or marshy grounds. The roads also improve, and you have an agreeable variety of villages and rivers. The Old Macse, which we first passed, exhibited a noble view. This is navigable for vessels of considerable burden. Numbers of these were lying in the river, and gave a very commercial appearance to the country. Our route after this lay through some villages, whose extreme neatness attracted our particular attention. Nothing can equal the purity of these cottages. The excessive labour they bestow on every article of the most minute importance, leaves nothing to offend the
eye,

eye, and gives the humblest cot that air of elegant simplicity which palaces do not always possess.

Rotterdam is a fine object for many miles before you reach it. The country is quite open, and the road pursues a very serpentine course, which gives you sufficient time to meditate on the singular beauties of that celebrated city. Rotterdam will strike the traveller with wonder; perhaps no town in Europe possesses objects so expressive of commercial importance. The canals are numerous and large; crowded with vessels in all parts, and covered with numerous draw-bridges, they exhibit a magnificent scene. All these canals are bordered with trees and *promenades*. Wherever the eye turns, objects of commercial grandeur strike it with astonishment. The public buildings are all consecrated to the same purposes. The churches are heavy and tasteless. There are cabinets of paintings in the possession of some private individuals; but the only public

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lic monument of letters and the fine arts, is a statue to the memory of Erasmus, who was a native of this place, and among the few luminaries of science which this country has produced. The artist has inspired the countenance with wonderfully fine intelligence.

The different degrees of zeal with which the memory of Erasmus was cherished, bespoke in past times a growing taste for literature. The statue first raised in honour of this great scholar, A. D. 1540, was of wood. Seventeen years refined their feelings, and blushing for the little respect they had shewn to the memory of the man who had immortalized their city, the statue of *wood* was exchanged for a statue of *stone*. A succeeding age, emulous of its predecessors, gave to the Apotheosis of Erasmus the last touch, and raised this statue of *bronze*. Doubtless this economical people had at the first well calculated the extent of the future expenditure, if literary characters should

should abound in the republic ; but finding this swampy soil unpropitious to genius, and productive only of dull commentators and sombrous logicians, they converted the image of *wood* into a statue of *stone*, without risking, in consequence of this precedent, any material diminution of the public revenue. In the sixty-five years which succeeded, no rival Erasmuses yet appearing, the utmost extravagance of civic honours was exhausted upon him, and a statue of *bronze* erected, all apprehension of future claim being at length entirely dissipated.

L E T T E R XVII.

WHAT Rome is to the antiquary, and Florence to the connoisseur, that is Rotterdam to the merchant. The manœuvres of a Prussian army are grand and striking ; but the strength there displayed excites reflections,

reflections, at which the heart revolts. When the olive is exchanged for the laurel, though the eye may be dazzled with military splendor, the heart sickens with grief. Commerce is the only art of national aggrandizement which reason sanctions, and humanity approves. This increases the strength, and extends the limits of an empire, without abridging the liberties, or shedding the blood of mankind.

Regarded in this view Rotterdam claims a distinguished rank among the objects of curiosity. Streets, markets, and quays, are crowded with the sons of active industry. Every coffee-house is a *bourse*, and all the society that is there cultivated, refers to bargains, transfers, and contracts. Here are no theatres, but warehouses; no routs, but on the Change; no amusements, but counting of gains. They have little deference for a stranger, particularly if he appears to take no interest in their commercial transactions. You may dine in
company

company with them, yet scarcely obtain the interchange of a minute's conversation: this being with them usually taken up by topics of infinitely higher moment, than those which the vague curiosity of a traveller would start. Their language, it must be owned, seems formed for them, and they for their language. Rude, harsh, and guttural—it never was intended for the polite intercourse of society, nor the soft effusions of an amorous passion. But gallantry and politeness are playthings to tare and trett; and all the courtly graces of language are baubles, compared with those finewy terms that tie and untie with effect the knots of trade.

We soon satisfied ourselves with the rarities of Rotterdam, and as we did not enter feelingly into the sublime speculations of these, we could not help regretting the dearth of public entertainments. The objects which struck us at first, soon lost their energy. Familiarized in a few hours to
their

their canals and their warehouses, we panted to find some new scene; and parting from this mart of traffic, this depository of commercial wealth, we entered a passage-boat at the close of the Saturday evening, and made the best of our way to the Hague.

L E T T E R XVIII.

THE lateness of the evening obliged us to pass between Rotterdam and the Hague, more rapidly than we wished. On our way we scarcely stopped at Delft, which is a pretty town of no great extent, but distinguished by two churches, in one of which is the monument raised to the memory of the famous Admiral Van Tromp. The china manufacture has been long celebrated throughout Europe, and still preserves its vigor and reputation. The town is charmingly situated, and the canal runs by it.

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We quitted the barge at Delft, and took carriage, in order to reach the Hague before the gates should shut. Here a new scene opened upon us. The Hague exhibits a striking contrast to Rotterdam. It is a town built in a stile of uncommon elegance, with all the air of fashionable residence. It has not the bustle, the population, nor the crouded objects of Rotterdam, yet it has the aspect of cheerfulness, and combines the vivacity of trade with the polish of pleasure. The *promenade* towards Scheveling is one of the finest things in Holland, and perhaps in Europe. It extends more than two English miles in length, and is kept in the most delightful order. The village at Scheveling, which terminates it, forms a very agreeable boundary, and the ocean rising above the land closes the vista, and gives to the whole a wonderful sublimity. Scheveling is a fishing town, and is situated on a fine sand—the view of the sea from this sand is beautiful and extensive. As to the

gardens of Count Bentinck and other *maisons de plaisance*, they are certainly curiosities in Holland, where the most uncouth distribution of grounds prevails, but merit little the attention of an English traveller, who will have seen in his own country more taste displayed in the green which surrounds the cottage, than in the most admired villas * of Holland.

When I remarked that the houses were built in a stile of elegance and grandeur, I did not mean to applaud the taste of the architects, as many of them wear a heavy and sombrous aspect; but the general effect is striking. The palace of the Stadtholder is more celebrated for the paintings and cabinets which adorn it within, than the face it exhibits without. The churches are spacious, but not numerous: the whole town possesses but *three*; of which one is the church of the reformed,

* Mr. Hope's mansion at Haerlem is a known exception to this general character:

the second the Lutheran, and the third Romish. The first is the handsomest, and was, at the time I saw it, filled with a splendid audience. The preachers here preserve those immense wigs, which in England ornament only the heads of the judges. Thus accoutred, and with only a small bible before them, they wear a very oratorical appearance—resort to an action by no means ungraceful, and appear animated and energetic. The still silence which prevailed throughout the hallowed edifice, convinced me that the impressive ardor of the preacher was not without its desired effect.

We were fortunate in being at the Hague during the fair. This began on the Sunday afternoon, agreeable to the practice in these countries, which, if it does not enjoin Sunday as the beginning, usually includes it within the number. This fair may possibly have given us a more cheerful idea of this place, than it would ordinarily excite. Theatres, reviews, public breakfasts, and every

species of amusement, took place; all the public roads were filled with carriages, passing and repassing, and the streets were crouded with puppet-shews, mountebanks, and wild beasts. What amused me beyond other novelties, was the singular dress of the Dutch girls. Any one would have imagined, that the figures which appeared on these occasions were masques, or designed as caricatures; but the numbers which crouded all the public ways, and the winning airs they affected, convinced me, that nothing but my want of taste resisted the influence of such singular attractions. Imagine a short figure, with more breadth than goes to the proportion of elegance, and with very little alteration in the width downwards to the waist, the petticoats descending half way only below the knee.—Imagine further, a round face, usually small, covered with a hat of near three feet in diameter, perfectly circular, and applied to the head in a part contiguous to the circumference.

cumference. You will readily perceive, that the hat, thus disposed, will project before the face, nearly the space of the whole diameter, touching the head, agreeably to the property of spheres, only in one point. Now you have nothing to do but to conceive a number of these figures in motion, brandishing their horizontal hats, rolling their diminutive eyes, and affecting a thousand ridiculous graces, under cover of this extensive canopy. The *tout ensemble* brought to my recollection those sculptural vagaries, in which a human figure is often made the prop of a cathedral seat, the support of a wainscot pulpit, or the stand of a mahogany table. If you deem my observations somewhat satirical, I must, in my own vindication, say, that this is a country in which few objects are to be found for panegyric or applause. The singularity of its situation, and the extent of its commerce, are almost the only topics on which curiosity would dwell, without terminating in censure: and

our daily observation evinces, that a nation, great in the arts of commerce, and possessed of all the resources of splendor and affluence, may yet be ignorant of the arts of refinement, and yield to nations less important, and less opulent, in the more fascinating attainments of elegance and good taste.

L E T T E R XIX.

TH E passage by water from the Hague to Amsterdam exhibits some pleasant scenery, and the boats are under so dextrous management, that you never travel slower than four miles an hour. They will pretend to greater speed, but I never found the motion exceed this. People are usually counselled to engage the *ruffie*, which is the name distinguishing the best cabbin; and for those who are averse to mixing with a promiscuous society, and have a decided antipathy to smoke, it is certainly a very wise precau-

precaution. Motives of curiosity always determined us to prefer the opposite measure; and we had many opportunities, by this means, of commenting upon the manners of this singular people.

Every man who enters the boat, whatever be his condition, either brings a pipe in his mouth or his hand. - A slight touch of the hat, upon entering the cabin, franks him for the whole time of his stay; and the laws of etiquette allow him to smoke in silence to the end of the passage. We see, as at a meeting of quakers, fixed features and changeless postures; the whole visage mysterious, and solemn, but betraying, it must be confessed, more of absence than intelligence. Hours will pass, and no mouth expand, but to whiff the smoke: nor any limb be put in motion, except to rekindle the pipe. The *coutume* of those societies, in the liberal use of the *crachoir*, does not preserve that attention to delicacy which some constitutions would require.

On our way to Amsterdam we had an opportunity of taking a transient view of Leyden, and of Haerlem. The Dutch towns have so close a resemblance to each other, in their canals, their bridges, and their buildings, that a traveller's curiosity is soon satiated. The university of Leyden owes its celebrity more to the talents of its professors, than the splendor or magnitude of its edifices. The oil painting by Jean de Leyde, is the only attraction which the Hotel-de-Ville possesses. Haerlem boasts Laurentius Coster, one of the inventors of printing, as a native. The great church, and the superb organ which it contains, are known throughout Europe.

A short time suffices to examine all the objects of curiosity in those towns, which are a perpetual repetition of the first impression. The banks of the canals are ornamented with various gardens and pleasure grounds, which the masters of the vessels are industrious to display. I shall suspend

my

my observations upon this class of curiosities till a future occasion. The first coup-d'œil, as we approached Amsterdam, was singular. I counted between 70 and 80 windmills, as we were coming down the canal. A grander object soon presented itself—the harbour crowded with vessels, and exhibiting all the apparatus of commercial opulence.

We entered this city at the close of the evening, and took up our quarters at Young's Hotel, which is usually esteemed the best, but for situation and convenience does little credit to a city of such magnitude.

I shall indulge you with the privilege of recreating your spirits, and recovering from the *ennui* which this uninteresting recital must have occasioned, before I venture my remarks upon Amsterdam. If the passage has appeared dull and heavy in the relation, I assure you it was not less so in the performance. The equable motion of the barge,

barge; the uniform solemnity of our society, and the unvaried face of the country, gave birth to a sombrous depression, dissipated only by the change of scene, which took place in the great and populous town of Amsterdam. We quickly perceived, that Amsterdam had few attractions for *delicate* curiosity. Amusement, however, we could not fail to derive from the novel scenes it inclosed, though they were usually deformed by some offensive appendages: satisfaction was, in most instances, lowered by disgust, and one sense generally gratified at the expence of another.

LETTER XX.

THE city of Amsterdam is renowned throughout Europe for its population, its traffic, and its opulence. Nothing can equal the grandeur of its port, which is thronged

thronged with vessels of all magnitudes. Wherever the eye ranges, masts and sails appear, covering the whole sphere of vision, and exhibiting the proud triumphs of commercial enterprize. It is contended of this harbour, that it wants depth; and that vessels of great burden, which enter the Texel, are reduced to numerous inconveniences: yet the toiling industry, and the persevering talents of this laborious people, have baffled all the opposition, and surmounted all the difficulties of nature and situation. They have stripped the surrounding nations of their resources, and concentrated the rays of commerce in their own republic. Not content with barricadoeing their realms against the rude assaults of Neptune, carrying off his waves by artificial channels, and preserving, by daily efforts, their empire from diluvian destruction—they have sought a good beyond the narrow pittance which their chill and cheerless soil produces, have emulated the greatest powers in navigating the ocean,

and, in importing from distant parts of the globe the luxuries of happier climes.

While I viewed this harbour, and ruminated on the successive advances of this people to the highest pinnacle of national prosperity *, I turned my eye to that city which once disputed the palm of commerce with this republic, and which, by the growing importance of this neighbouring power, had been reduced to insignificance. The treaty of Westphalia raised the grandeur of Holland upon the ruins of Antwerp. The forts of Lillo and Liefenshoek determined the fate of that unfortunate city, and the antient majesty of the Scheld now bows to the usurped authority and furtive honours of the Texel.

The ardour, the activity, the croud, and the bustle, which prevail in all quarters of the

* The trade of Amsterdam has of late years been very much on the decline, and now consists chiefly in the negotiation of bills of exchange. The real imports and exports do not probably much exceed one half of what they were some years past.

L E T T E R X X.

port, are inconceivable. Bells are sounding, and vessels parting, at all hours. Piles of merchandize, and throngs of passengers, fill all the avenues. It appears the mart of exhaustless plenty, and the grand depositary of Europe. The streets of Amsterdam are narrow and filthy—the whole city pierced by an infinity of canals, which cut each other in every possible direction. The Bourse is convenient, and not inelegant. The Maison de Ville, or Stadthouse, is spacious and magnificent—encumbered nevertheless with fanciful ornaments, and ill-proportioned in its several parts; but the scale on which it is built is immense, and the general effect stupendous. The churches are raised after no very superior model, and can boast of few attractive ornaments. I entered three the second evening of our stay, where service was performed; numerous congregations hung attentive on the preacher's accents, and zeal on the one part was returned by corresponding emotion on the other.

It requires no small perseverance to run over the objects most deserving attention at Amsterdam. The uniformity of the streets, and the uncleanness incident to a crowded population, offend the eye, while the action of the sun upon the stagnant waters increases in a high degree the difficulties of being pleased.

Nothing can wear a more awkward appearance than the carriages, the bodies of which are placed on low sledges, and drawn by one horse. The driver is on foot; and in addition to the concern of the horse, he is obliged to watch every movement of the sledge, that the carriage may not be upset. The origin of this custom is well known to be founded in the apprehension of danger to the houses by the violence of wheel-carriages, and all the *fiacres* are therefore, by authority of the government, constructed upon sledges. Some few years past, no four-wheel carriages were to be seen. Later refinements have at length introduced

roduced them, and this inelegant and inexpeditious mode of visiting and airing is abandoned to persons, whose fortune or frugality admit not a more costly equipage.

The bridge over the Amstel is considered as a choice *morceau* of antient architecture, and is a great ornament to the river, which rolls beneath its arches.

I saw nothing beyond these, which merits a moment's discussion; and I hasten from those scenes of uncleanly aspect, this compound of villanous smells, as Falstaff would call it, to one of the most charming visions that ever feasted my eyes—where all that presented itself gave birth to opposite sensations, and banished for a moment every obnoxious image this city had excited. But I must reserve this account for a subsequent letter. Your nerves might suffer by too sudden a transition, and some interval may be necessary to purify the channel of those ideas which have so long dwelt upon polluted

luted objects. The scenes to which I shall conduct you, will repay the penance of a short delay. They are curious, on the score of singularity, if not upon the principle of taste. They boast a neatness unexampled in courts or palaces, and in a certain mode of ornament have no parallel in Europe.

LETTER XXI.

IN my last I engaged to furnish you with a relation of a little excursion made into North Holland, for the purpose of visiting the village of Broek. It was early in the morning, that, curious to examine a place of which report had spoken so loudly, we entered a vessel for Buyk-floodt. This passage took up an hour; and gave us a very gratifying view of the scenes which most adorn Amsterdam.—Parting from the port, we turned our eyes to contemplate the mighty
mart

mart of commerce we had quitted—the objects were crowded, and the groupe sublime.

The city appeared invested with numerous flotas, which reared their towering masts, like forest-trees, into the air. All that offends the eye, and deforms the aspect of this celebrated city, was obscured and concealed by the more prominent objects which form its grandeur. The opening scenes of North Holland presented a beautiful contrast to the country behind. All was soft, still, and flourishing—the houses exhibited the appearance of ease, affluence, and neatness: the lands, highly cultured, displayed the marks of laborious industry, and growing fertility.

From Buykloodt, which is charmingly situated, at an equal distance from Amsterdam and Broek, we entered a second boat, which was to convey us to the latter—the canal ran along a most pleasing country—the banks were occasionally crowned by

some neat villa of private residence, or some beautiful rendezvous of public resort.

We were gradually prepared by the different cottages on the banks of this canal, for the scenes to which our ardent curiosity tended. Broek at length caught our eye. It is a village of no great extent, situate on the western side of the canal, and forming the most ravishing landscape. As we eyed it from the boat, it resembled a finished picture, and appeared to exist only in imagination, or upon canvas. We landed with anxious curiosity, and pursued some winding-paths, in order to examine, with more minute attention, this enchanting vision. Placed within the bosom of these surrounding beauties, I fancied myself in that Elysium, which poets have described, where all that meets the senses is creative of pleasurable tranquillity. The houses were painted with the most vivid and varied colours. The windows were transparent as chrystal; and the tiles which roofed these pure abodes,

adorned with varnished surfaces, reflected a thousand hues from the rays of a meridian sun. The gardens were framed with singular art and ingenuity, and were distributed into the most fanciful divisions. Each several department exhibited a groupe of fantastic forms. The shrubs, which had shot their roots deep into the soil, were sculptured into all the forms of real and imaginary nature. Birds, beasts, and reptiles of every description, were here congregated in peaceful union, as in the ark of old: all wore the same livery, and derived their nutriment from the same elements. The church, however, was excepted from the law of universal decoration. The only ornaments of this sacred building were finished simplicity, and spotless purity—happy emblems of those sacrifices which alone adorn the altar of religious adoration. Wherever the eye could penetrate, or the feet could stray, throughout this fascinating village, all was completely correspondent.

The areas which surrounded the houses—the winding walks, alleys, and avenues, were equally correct.

Nor is it alone exterior elegance to which these people aspire—the insides of many houses are richly decorated, and finished with the most costly ornaments. We obtained admittance into one, and were astonished at the polished surfaces which every article of the most minute description possessed. One apartment, which we entered, was paved with small square tiles, put together without any cement, and presenting the most pleasing aspect. The furniture of a chamber in the same house was very sumptuous, composed of filken ornaments, richly embroidered. This is, agreeably to antient prescription, bequeathed from father to son, and preserved as an offering to Hymen—such is the custom of these Arcadian villagers—from generation to generation. There is also a practice prevailing here, common, I believe, to all the natives of North Holland:

land : To every house, of whatever quality, there is an artificial door, elevated near three feet above the level of the ground, and never opened but upon two occasions. When any part of the family marries, the bride and bridegroom enter the house by this door ; and when either of the parties die, the corpse is carried out by the same door. Immediately after the due ceremonies are performed in either of those cases, this door is fastened up, never to turn on its hinges again, till some new event of a similar nature demand its services. The extraordinary neatness which prevails throughout the whole is a prodigy.

On a visit which the late Emperor Joseph made to this village, he is said to have experienced the rigour of those injunctions, which are laid upon all who view the Orphan House ; and before he was admitted to tread the sacred floor, he conformed to the ceremony of taking off his shoes. That care and attention may preserve the

several apartments in a state of internal neatness, is readily conceivable; but that the outsides of their houses, roofs, and fronts,—their gravelled grounds, and open paths, should exhibit no marks of occasional violence, should betray no symptoms injurious to their systematic correctness, is a mystery for which I cannot account. The natural action of the elements—the blowing storm, and the driving shower, might well be deemed, too strong opponents of art and nature: yet, exposed to all the vicissitudes of the seasons, not a vestige of injury could be traced. How patient must be that assiduity, which watches those accidents, which imperceptibly repairs their ravages, and gives to those unexampled productions of industry, uniformity and permanence.

I quitted this singular spot with reluctance. As the barge moved slowly along, my eyes feasted upon the parting fairy landscape. I could not govern my sensations.

tions.—Did ever poet image aught so fair?

*Dreaming in whispering groves, by the hoarse brook,
Or prophet, to whose vision heaven descends!*

The picture gradually disappeared, as the colours faded; and was at length ravished from my sight. The vulgar scenes of Amsterdam reduced my ideas to a less rapturous standard. Were I to measure existence with the antediluvian antients, I should never be able to erase those scenes from my mind, nor entirely convince myself, that the whole was not a delightful illusion of the fancy.

L E T T E R XXII.

I WAS so extremely delighted with the little I saw of North Holland, that I could, with great pleasure, have penetrated farther; but our time did not admit of any extension of the tour. At a very short dis-

tance from Broek lies Saardam, a village in many respects similar to that we visited, but more particularly celebrated for the temporary residence of the Czar Peter the Great, who spent a considerable time here ; and *Petershoff*, or Peter's house, is shewn to the present day. We contented ourselves with viewing it as we passed, and quitted Amsterdam the following day. We continued to travel by water, and the passage between Amsterdam and Utrecht displayed a greater variety of scenery, than we had yet met with in any part of Holland. The country wore a more fertile aspect, and the banks of the canal were covered with gardens.

Utrecht is built very much upon the model of the towns we had before seen. Its public buildings possess no particular beauty. Its university owes none of its celebrity to the magnificence of its structures. The great tower of St. Martin is indeed a very noble remnant of antient art. The view
from

from the summit of this tower is very extensive. Near twenty cities may be discovered by the eye, within a very bounded space. I ascended the tower with great eagerness, and was impatient to reach the point of observation. But, when arrived at a certain height I took a survey of the country—my situation was not perfectly to my satisfaction: the stone, mouldered by the finger of time, and apparently loosened by decay, wore a tremendous aspect. Having climbed within a few paces of the summit, I descended, with a sober determination to take in future my views from some less aspiring eminence, where, if I saw objects to less advantage, I should also see them with less trepidation. I took little pains to examine the town. It wore a very dull appearance, and was animated only by the images it revived, of its political importance. This city was distinguished in 1572, for the union of the provinces, which was there formed. And the celebrated Congress of

1712, has interwoven the name of Utrecht, with the history of the greatest states in Europe. Duclos's Historical Records of those Times, have some particulars of a very interesting nature, respecting the conduct of the Dutch in this Congress. One anecdote related by him, I will transcribe. Villars, you recollect, had gained an important victory over the allies at Denain. The Dutch ministers still however presumed, notwithstanding this disaster, and the armistice concluded between England and France, to talk in a style of great haughtiness. But the Cardinal de Polignac arose and silenced them, by declaring in a firm and decisive manner, that the period for haughty and imperious language was past. "Messrs." said he, "les circonstances font changées—il faut changer du ton. Nous traiterons chez vous, de vous, & sans vous."

From Utrecht we took cabriolets for Boisduduc, or, as the Dutch call it, Hertzogenbosche.

bosche. This occupied a night, and part of the following day. The route we pursued is not very frequently travelled. It gave us however an opportunity of seeing another part of the country. It was between ten and eleven o'clock when we reached the banks of the Leck, and the lateness of the hour was pleaded as an excuse for not passing the river; so we slept in our clothes till morning, and passed the river at sun-rise. We then proceeded to Bommel, crossing that arm of the Rhine which bears the name of the Waal.

From Bommel to Bois-le-duc, we had to encounter a road worse than any yet seen, and which admonished us momentarily to prepare for the chance of an overthrow. The country around was wretched, barren, and swampy. After crossing the Maese, we arrived safe in the middle of the day at Bois-le-duc, where the carriage waited for us. It had been our plan, previous to commencing the expedition, to take this course,
and

and issue by Bois-le-duc, which formed a more extensive tour than is usually made. The customary track is to quit Holland by way of Gorcum and Breda, on which side the country is more fertile, and the roads infinitely better, than by the route we took ; and I know of no advantages which can be mentioned, to counterbalance those inconveniences, except that of traversing more extensively the country, and making ourselves acquainted with some of its worst parts.

Bois-le-duc had nothing to attract us ; but for the purposes of refreshment, we determined to continue there the day. We had travelled very hard for a week past, and had seldom rested night or day. The inn at which we were lodged, offered us comfortable quarters ; had we resolved to spend a longer time ; but, impatient to enter upon the pressing parts of our tour, we settled every preliminary for our journey to Maastricht, and held ourselves in readiness for an early departure.

L E T T E R XXIII.

THE Dutch are universally celebrated for their attention to cleanliness; and *artifice* is not more proverbial of this nation, than *neatness*. I have before remarked, how well this observation is founded with respect to the villages: here, indeed, it prevails in every possible shape, and pervades all ranks. No labour is spared to give ornaments and lustre to the meanest cottage, nor is it in the power of the painter to do more than justice to those polished scenes. But this extraordinary attention to neatness has a nearer connection with necessity than choice. The moist exhalations which arise from the swampy soil they inhabit, would be an over-match for inferior industry; and without those repeated exertions, their health and their property must be desolated
by

by their invariable foes, Damp and Mildew. What was first their irksome duty, is now become their pleasure and their pride.

In many houses the best chambers are kept constantly closed. Suites of apartments are in many instances reserved for the single purpose of ostentatious neatness, while the rich possessor himself inhabits a garret, or a cellar. A Dutchman is not remarkable for personal cleanliness, and the crachoir, of which they make so general a use, demonstrates that they have at least a set of feelings not strictly in unison with delicacy.

It is universally remarked of this people, that they are knavish and extortionate—their trading avarice would seem to render this charge not wholly undeserving of credit. The extreme passion for wealth which actuates them, and the credit attached to extended possessions, are not very favourable to the cultivation of uncorrupt integrity. The mind absorbed in the adoration
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of such an idol, is often found slipping: the darling pursuit will not suffer check from slight obstacles, and the progress from one stage of avarice to another, is imperceptibly rapid. The tender feelings of honour and honesty once repulsed, become less obtrusive in their monitions, till at length the most essential principles of morality are regarded as shadowy distinctions.

That such reasonings are strictly applicable to the Hollanders, I shall neither pretend to affirm or deny.—Such is at least the turn of general opinion; but I think, however, that justice has not always been done to those laborious people. The character they may have merited in the great towns, and the most notorious places of resort, is ill-applied to the hardy inhabitants of the humble cot: and a numerous class undoubtedly exists, who, secluded from the crowded mart, have not yet become tinctured with the national foible. Were I to pronounce upon these, agreeably to the experience I have had

had of some, and the observation I made upon others, I should rank them with the more meritorious part of mankind, over whom honesty, virtue, and content, maintain an equal influence. There was an expression in the countenance of those toiling villagers, which disarmed fear in the most perilous situation.

When we entered the dark abode, after crossing the Biesboch, and found ourselves surrounded with men whose language we could not speak—the solitary and desert situation inspired alarm; but a few moments interview with those uncouth cottagers discovered how groundless had been such terrors. The language of nature spoke in their looks the integrity of their hearts, and we passed the evening with less dependence upon the arms we carried, than the unsuspecting honesty we found. The little apartment which we occupied, exhibited a circumstance rarely found in houses appropriated to the purposes of a *cabaret*. In

one

one corner of the chamber was a book, apparently destined for general use. One of our guides had taken up the volume, and was occupied great part of the night in studying its contents. Curious to know the object of his amusement, I intreated his permission to view the book, and found that the lad was regaling himself with scripture history, and though nearly exhausted with the fatigues of the voyage, he spent great part of the night in reading the Bible.

Our passage between Leyden and Haerlem gave me an opportunity of remarking another circumstance of similar report to their religious character. The master of the vessel had prepared his dinner, which consisted of some potatoes, boiled to a powder over the little fire-pan which kindled the pipes. He had placed his little dish upon a bench—when, taking up his hat, he held it before his eyes for some moments; and having consecrated by this act of devotion the provision before him, he devoured it

without apprehension or delay. I observed his partner, who succeeded him, perform the same sacred rite upon beginning his simple meal.

Those circumstances made me decide, that great respect was paid to religious obligations, since the presence of strangers did not interrupt the order of duty. An equal curiosity induced me to take up a book which lay open upon a table at the *cabaret* on the banks of the Maese, of which I confess I could not report so favourably. The balance, however, yet stands on the better side; and if I were to draw any conclusions from my own observations in relation to religion and morals, it would certainly contain an encomium upon their virtue, which I am willing to believe the Hollanders deserve in a higher degree than is consistent with general opinion.

L E T T E R XXIV.

I KNOW not any thing which strikes a traveller more, in entering upon Holland, than the nature and general face of the country, pressed by the rising ocean, whose mighty waves are elevated beyond the level of the land. It appears the country of art, wrested by the industry of its natives from the realms of Neptune, and guarded by eternal toils against his irruptions. Nothing can equal the impression excited by a view of the distant waves, whose swelling surges seem ready to swallow up lands, cities, and hamlets, in primæval ruin. Goldsmith's accurate picture of this country recurred to my memory, as I meditated upon its miraculous existence :

To men of other minds my fancy flies,
 Embosom'd in the deep, where Holland lies :
 Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
 Where the broad ocean leans against the land,

And sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride ;
Onward, methinks, and diligently flow,
The firm compacted bulwark seems to grow,
Spreads its long arms amidst the watery roar,
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore :
While the pent-ocean, rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile,
The flow canal, the yellow-blossom'd vale,
The willow tufted bank, the gliding sail,
The crouded mart, the cultivated plain,
A new creation—rescued from his reign.

It will naturally be imagined, that a country under such circumstances, can boast little beauty. Flat, swampy, and open, it exhibits no variety to the eye—the soil appears coarse, the prospects dreary, and the atmosphere chilled, and impregnated with constant exhalations.

But if no pleasing varieties exist in the general aspect of the country, a still greater uniformity appears in the best and most populous towns. Divided and sub-divided by an equal multiplicity of canals—pierced by streets, and crouded by buildings in the same mercantile stile of tasteless grandeur,
they

they afford only a perpetual repetition of the same impression. The water, which usually contributes to variety, here adds to the uniformity, and is indeed its grand source, conducted, as it invariably is, in those channels which best suit the purposes of commodious navigation. The gardens are only so far estimable, as they exhibit at one period of the year a show of beautiful flowers, and serve to convince the traveller that vegetation *actually exists*, amidst the profusion of water, which overspreads the face of the country. In all other respects, the Dutch gardens are proverbially at variance with every principle of taste and elegance.

I dwelt with rapture on those which ornamented the village of Broek, because they pretended to no magnitude or stile. They were consistent with every other part of the system, and contributed essentially to the decoration of that artificial scene. They had a merit in that situation, which they

would have wanted in another, where any thing beyond neatness and singularity were attempted. But to examine those mangled grounds which cover the banks of their canals, and which are denominated gardens, is only to see how far depraved taste can extend. Nature is, in those regions, wholly out of repute. From some secret suspicions of her awkwardness, they impose a code of vegetative laws, agreeably to which it should seem she *must* act, and condemn all deviations from it as inelegant luxuriances. Hence the pruning knives, and a thousand instruments, are perpetually in hand to keep her in order. They think that trees ought to grow like animals—like door-posts—like walls—or in short like any thing but what they were intended for. Hence you see what these people call a garden, is often a range of parapets, a string of alleys, or a very menagerie. They seem to have found out the art of effecting what the elder sages thought impracticable, and

weakened my faith in that maxim of Horace, which I before deemed universal :—

“*Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.*”

A more complete victory of art over nature never existed. Prostrate, enchained, expiring,* the latter seems now to submit without a struggle to the tyranny of the former, resolving to wage no longer a war upon such unequal terms. Most of the gardens, I saw, led to those reflections : they were adorned with the trophies of victorious art. Shaped into the fantastic forms of dragons, griffins, or dolphins—the despairing shrubs seemed to meditate no further irregularities, but conformed their vigorous shoots to those arbitrary laws by which they had been disciplined. A garden *à l'Angloise*, is not without its imitators in Holland, yet almost the whole country is still over-run with those Gothic devices. They are still held in secret respect, and cultivated with unwearied attention. They

are esteemed the precious monuments of *antient* art—the invaluable bequests of their industrious ancestors, and the chief ornaments of their country.

There is certainly a consistency in this predilection: it is very much in character with the air, the dress, and the habits of life, which those people cultivate in themselves. Moulded personally on no principle of elegance, they borrow no improvements from their dresses, which are equally at war with convenience and beauty. Nature seems to have hewn them with a rough chisel, and formed them upon a plan of business. All their pursuits bear reference to the same principle: taste is industriously excluded from all their designs, to whatever they apply; and their buildings and gardens are not more grotesque and uncouth, than their habits and manners. Any man, however, who sees the intenseness with which they pursue their plans of traffic, will cease to wonder that so wealthy a nation should yet
be

be so far removed from refinement. The elegancies of life have scarcely a name in their vernacular tongue: the vortex of trade ingulphs all considerations; and wealth is sufficiently respectable, to atone for the absence of every other quality. These maxims, which are here revered by all ranks, are sufficient to preclude the introduction of those improvements which adorn society, and give a lustre to states. It would indeed be a novel event in the history of mankind, if any thing great in arts or refinements should arise from a nation, whose sole talent is industry, and whose ruling passion is the love of gain.

L E T T E R XXV.

THE kings of Spain, from the time they became masters of the mines of Mexico and Peru, have been considered as the cashiers of Europe; and it was well said by Boccalini, that Spain is to Europe, what the mouth is to the body, “*tout y passe, et rien n’y reste.*” However Holland may stand in the same predicament in one respect, it certainly differs very widely in the other.

• The Dutch are at this moment the cashiers of Europe, and the bankers of every state; but with a policy peculiar to themselves, they convert the weaknesses of other nations, into the instruments of their own aggrandizement. Their speculations are usually formed upon solid principles; and though they appear to hazard much, they seldom sustain loss. So completely are they occupied

occupied by the prèdominant concerns of negotiation, that they appear indifferent about their government. Naturally they are bold, steady, and enamoured of liberty. Europe has witnessed their courage when provoked. Few nations have entered the lists of war with more reluctance, or quitted them with more renown. A slight injury will not arouse, nor a slight revenge appease them. Inveigled into treaties by hope or fear, never by choice, they usually relieve themselves from such obligations. They hold them no farther binding, than their interest dictates, and never scruple to traffic with the declared enemies of their allies—provided it can be done with secrecy and safety. Considering themselves rather in the capacity of a commercial association, than a state of Europe, they regard the cabals of cabinets, and the revolutions of empires, with political indifference. Unambitious of those laurels for which monarchs too often interrupt the peace of mankind,

they

they calmly cultivate the arts of industry, and study to fill their coffers ; while kingdoms, inflamed by trivial animosities, are exhausting their treasures to equalize dominion, and preserve the balance of power. The same phlegmatic inattention is apparent to the political movements which take place in the bosom of their own country. Constitutionally averse to monarchical authority, and inheriting from their ancestors a rooted attachment to republican government, they yet submit to forms which shadow forth a subjection that their forefathers had blushed to acknowledge. We were under the necessity of wearing the orange cockade, throughout every part of Holland. All ranks of people continue to wear this badge of princely authority. Formerly it marked the distinction of parties—at present it covers those divisions, familiarizes these tame descendants of a hardy race to a yoke at which they secretly revolt, and tends to establish the authority of a power

whose existence at one moment appeared equivocal.

The reasonings which determine the Hollanders to such passive measures, are not founded on the extinction of antient prejudices, or the forfeiture of original spirit ; but the inconveniences which would result to *trade* from an opposition to the victorious power. The grand wheels and springs must be for a period neglected—revolutions would generate confusion, and arrest for a time the tide of commerce : nor can plans of revolt be successfully supported, without great expence of time, labour, and manufactures.

It is evident, that considerations of this nature must influence the Dutch to their present conduct, as they are by no means reconciled to the authority of the Stadtholder. Personal safety was pleaded as the reason for assuming thus universally this badge of servitude, yet discontents are numerous, and the *throne* of the Stadtholder
appears

appears but ill-secured. The government which exists at this moment is certainly ill-suited to the temper and genius of a people whose reigning prejudice is an aversion to princes. It is a government, whose parts do not well assimilate, and which never have accorded. The superaddition of an hereditary Prince to the pre-established authority of the state, has counteracted their antient labours—has destroyed the uniformity, the purity, the correctness of their republic, and opened a channel for political interference from the Powers of Europe. Louis the XIV. and XV. by turns, gave them a Stadtholder; and the late commotions, which shook the House of Orange, were not viewed with political indifference by the Powers of Europe.

What will be the issue of those discontents, which, through quelled, are not composed, time can alone decide; but certain it is, that the temper of the Hollander is not the most placable, nor the most disposed to forgiveness.

ness. Princes are, in general, obnoxious to this people, who acknowledge no distinctions but those of property ; and if a Hollander has ever imagined the reigning Prince tinctured with principles of tyranny—if he has at any period detected him in designs to aggrandize his own authority, and contract the public liberties, he will ever regard him with suspicion, and no after-acts can purge the memory of this delinquency.

Louis XV. experienced in this stubborn people, the lasting effects of first impressions. Master of Flanders, and in possession of 35,000 Dutch prisoners, he pressed them to accept a peace, which their situation would have rendered a more proper request on their part ; but they obstinately refused to attend to his offers. Impressed with the *hauteur* of Louis XIV. in 1672, they could not consider a successor of the same *name*, as divested of the same *qualities*. Deeming that what a prince could offer, a republic should not accept, they viewed with a suspicious

spicious eye all his overtures—referring his most specious declarations to artifice or necessity, and deeming every effort to effect a conciliation, a symptom of weakness, or a snare for their seduction.

Voltaire has remarked this conduct in the Dutch with his usual animation : “ L’ir-
“ ruption de Louis XIV. & l’année
“ 1672, étoient encore dans leurs cœurs,
“ et j’ose dire que je me suis apperçu plus
“ d’une fois que leur esprit frappé de la
“ hauteur de Louis XIV. ne pouvant conce-
“ voir la moderation de Louis XV. ils ne
“ la crurent jamais sincere. On regardoit
“ toutes ses démarches pacifiques, et tous ses
“ ménagemens, tantôt comme des preuves
“ de faiblesse, tantôt comme des pièges.”

L E T T E R XXVI.

TH E journey from Bois-le-duc to Maeftricht was very laborious for the horses, and very irksome to ourselves. The road continued to exhibit numberless difficulties; it was almost the whole way composed of a sandy soil, ploughed into deep and dangerous furrows; and we had the mortification to be dragged for two days, at a foot pace, over a country which wore the most desolate aspect. The only objects which rose out of this barren soil were some scattered gibbets, which well assorted with the murderous face of the country.

Our first night was, however, passed at a very pretty village, whose name was so guttural, that I could not divine how many consonants went to the formation of it; for you know, both in Dutch and Flemish lore, a few vowels go a great way. I must content myself, therefore, with telling you,

that it was about half way between Bois-le-duc and Maestricht—was furrounded in its immediate precincts by some charming village scenery, and wore a very picturesque appearance: and this will, I hope, compensate for the omission of a hoarse name, “quod versu dicere non est.”

Our second day's journey was equally forlorn, and equally disgusting, till our eyes caught the banks of the Meuse, and the lofty bulwarks of Maestricht. It was fair-time when we entered it. All were dressed in their holiday attire—the streets were crowded with old and young, and the air was filled with the sounds of mirth, interrupted by the dissonant braying of trumpets. We saw nothing in Maestricht beyond the ordinary run of towns. Its fortifications are, indeed, possessed of immense strength, and exhibit an impregnable system of defence. There is a cave into which the curious sometimes venture; but the circumstances accompanying it did not induce us to add to that number.

Our

Our next day was taken up in the journey from Maestricht to Spa, which gave us an opportunity of seeing Liege. I have before remarked, that Amsterdam was the most uncleanly town I ever saw. I shall now except Liege. I never could have imagined a town in such a situation deformed by so much filth. The streets were paved, the buildings faced, and the houses lined with dirt of the blackest colouring. In addition to this, the whole town was in uproar. Hussars, with naked sabres, were stationed at regular intervals throughout every avenue of the town; and the savage countenances of these rude barbarians, were to be encountered at every step. The cathedral is noble, the *bourse* spacious and commodious. We were not a little rejoiced to quit this town in the afternoon, and I think we left behind us the aggregate of every thing that is dark, tremendous, and offensive.

Our route then lay upon a good *pavée*, with no inconsiderable hills, to Spa, and we entered this singular place in the dusk of

the evening. The great charm of Spa consists in the blended society, which is there found from various motives. The country is romantic, and the *promenades* pleasant. The places of usual residence are embosomed by hills of no great magnitude, but whose relative situation to the town gives a picturesque air to the spot. The salubrity of the springs first formed the importance of this place: but as mankind are oftener afflicted with *imaginary* than *real* complaints, as the disorders of the spirits are more numerous than the maladies of the body, Spa is less in repute for its medicinal nostrums than its more potent attractions—the ball-rooms, the concerts, and the galas.

If one may judge from the exorbitant charges here made, health is not purchased upon moderate terms; and though the springs gush unbribed from the soil, their waters do not continue to flow with equal liberality. A Spa residence, of the shortest duration, is not made without considerable expence. Were a palace to be converted
into

into a caravansera, scarcely would an higher price be fixed upon the apartments than is here demanded. Yet our kind landlords assure us, that the price of our apartments will increase in, what appears to me, a geometric progression with the advancement of the season.

One would imagine, that in a place which nature destined as an asylum for the sick, as a kind of grand hospital of invalids,—wine would be a superfluous article, and scarcely fetch any price. The contrary is the fact: the afflicted multitude who crowd here, seem to swallow down—no doubt by the advice of their physicians—larger potions of this favourite beverage than even of the pure and unadulterated element: by which judicious medical arrangement, this place maintains its reputation, as the grand continental mart, not only of health, but of festivity and pleasure.

L E T T E R XXVII.

Spa, May 20, 1791.

MANKIND have almost uniformly converted necessity into a virtue, and what has been originally submitted to with reluctance has usually terminated in choice. The swampy soil of Holland, and the numerous nervous fevers which arose from this circumstance, gave birth to those black patches upon each temple, which, by the superstition of antient times, were deemed specifics against nervous affections. These are now become a part of the Dutch dress. In vain does "La petite Hollandoise" put on her broad orbicular bonnet, or coiff herself in uncouth lustre; till the large black patches are affixed, she can expect to make no conquest. She may display her rounded shoulder, and exhibit her slipshod heel; yet

will

will her artillery prove ineffectual without the aid of these proud ornaments.

Something similar has taken place in the numerous springs and baths throughout Europe. Accident discovered their salubrious effects in remedying disorders, and restoring shattered constitutions. Amusements are deemed necessary to the dissipation of that languor, which ill health and medicinal regimen are apt to engender. The colours of pleasure are never displayed in vain. The votaries of amusement soon crowded to that standard, where the banners of their goddesses were exalted, and the empire thus became divided between the valetudinarian and the voluptuary.

This commerce is not without its advantages. Doubtless the associated supplicants of Esculapius had formed a ghastly band, and might have passed a miserable *sejour* in the society of each other. The pallid face, the leaden eye, the hollow cheek, and the emaciated frame required the introduction of

some more cheerful countenances ; the commixture of those in whom the tide of blood is not chilled by age, nor tainted by malady, would enliven the scenes thus deformed, and tend to accelerate the salutary effects of the springs. But mankind know no medium ; at present the rivulets of health are swallowed up in the torrents of pleasure, the severity of regimen relaxes into the luxury of debauch, and the medicinal potion is supplanted by the Bacchanalian draught. Nor is this all—the harpies of fortune are disposed in every quarter of this Circean Elysium. The young and the incautious are inveigled by the specious appearances of personal splendor and titled consequence. Fortunes are thus committed, not to the mercy of a card, or the chance of a die,—but to the artifice of those, whose sole talent is imposture, and whose sole property is vested in the funds of human weakness.

The anecdotes which are here circulated, and the estimates here formed upon the issue
of

of former seasons, render it more than probable, that the vast influx of company in the present, will exhibit various revolutions of fortune in the gaming circle. Charmed, as I am, with the aspect of its hills, and the fame of its waters, I cannot but consider Spa as first amongst those places of general resort, which swell the tide of human corruption. I cannot but believe, that more morals are debauched by the contagion of its vices, than nerves braced by the vigour of its air; and that more fortunes are ruined by the fascination of its amusements, than constitutions restored by the salubrity of its springs.

LETTER XXVIII.

Düsseldorf, May 25, 1791.

THE man who travels for higher purposes than those of pleasure, will not make a long residence at Spa. We left it after having bestowed a whole week upon contemplating its deserted springs, and strolling amongst its silent promenades. I glanced on the Sunday over the tablets which decorate the church; and found, that superstition has *once* enjoyed as great dominion here as pleasure *now* does. I could not forbear remarking one in particular, which held out a variety of indulgences to the *confrères* of the holy sacrament. One of those grants purported, that if any one of this fraternity visit the sick with the holy sacrament; or, if indisposed, write "Pater Noster," and "Ave Maria," five times, he shall be entitled to indulgence for sixty days

next

next ensuing. This appears a very reasonable purchase, and is, I imagine, the only article at Spa, which has not advanced in price. Aix-la-Chapelle finished our journey of Monday. The road passed for the greater part through a hilly country, and ill-announced, by its vast inequalities in the neighbourhood of Aix, the entrance to an asylum of invalids.

Aix is, indeed, a grand infirmary; the baths are salubrious and convenient; they are deemed highly restorative of decayed constitutions; and are, therefore, frequented by numbers, whose debaucheries have scarcely left them the strength to complain. That quarter of the town in which the hotels stand, is also the situation of the baths, and for the most part, the residence of the invalids. There is an air of vivacity in the shops, the porticoes, and the assembly rooms; and the general exterior is not without a pleasant and cheerful effect. But so many ghastly figures are perpetually moving

ing before you, wrapped in sedans, or crawling from seat to seat, that cheerfulness is crossed by a thousand painful emotions; and amusement in such a scene would scarcely have upon me a better effect, than a dance in a dungeon, or a concert in a lazaretto.

The cathedral of this town is a very noble monument of antient times, and stands in high repute for the regalia of Charlemagne, and other precious toys, which it is known to contain. The greatest curiosity it had for me, was the groupe of worshippers, which was planted round one of its altars. An old Franciscan was conducting the religious ceremonies; and the people, who were of various qualities and conditions, had thrown themselves for the most part into the attitude resembling a cross. They extended their arms as they knelt, and preserved both these and their countenance immoveably fixed,—notwithstanding the interruption they might be supposed to experience

experience from the passing and repassing of strangers. An equal fervor of devotion presented itself at Juliers, to which we passed in the evening of yesterday. The rain was falling incessantly ; yet this did not deter a number of people from repairing to an altar erected in the open street, facing the window of our hotel, in order to perform their vespers. For nearly an hour they succeeded each other in these sacred services,—kneeling upon the naked stones, without the least precaution, in contempt of the frowns of weather, or the smiles of the rude spectator.

I confess I feel rebuked, rather than diverted, by such examples ; nor can I withhold my respect from those, who, after the way which *we* call superstition, so fervently worship the God of their fathers. We left Juliers this morning by sun-rise, and taking a breakfast with an honest German, three leagues on our way, obtained from him instructions for our route ; and having crossed
the

the Rhine, in face of Dusseldorf, find ourselves agreeably accommodated by the good offices of Zimmerman, at the Hotel de Deux Ponts.

L E T T E R XXIX.

May 26, 1791:

I KNOW not how others may feel, but I must confess very little pleasure is by me derivable from the *solitary* contemplation of works of art. When the eye has feasted upon the charming tints of a captivating picture, and is called to gaze upon others in succession,—it appears as though some discussion of the first, and some communication upon its excellencies were indispensable. Such at least was the temper of my mind in viewing the gallery of Dusseldorf; and as we are now housed under the roof of an honest post-master, five leagues on our way to Cologne, I am impatient to disclose

to you the impressions I received from the invaluable collection that place contains.

You must not expect *as yet* much science in my descriptions; for I have not yet learnt the technical phraseology. From some motive which has escaped me, I chose to invert the usual order of observation, and intreated to see the chamber of Rubens first. The three principal paintings in this department were the Adoration of the Shepherds, the Death of Seneca, and the Last Judgment. In the first of these the countenance of the Virgin was wonderfully expressive of solemnity and joy—the looks of the shepherds of surprize and congratulation. The Death of Seneca made me shudder. Of the Last Judgment, I *ought* to speak in raptures, but shall refer you to those, whose optics are better qualified to do justice to this vast and sublime groupe.

The second chamber was that of Vander-Werf. The paintings of this master, whose polished pencil defies the strictness of criticism,

cism, present little that can move the heart. I gave him but a short trial, and hastened to the third, or Italian chamber. Where Raphael formed his gay and youthful idea of St. John the Baptist, I know not,—but I should rather have expected to find this great preacher of repentance, in the Hermit of Salvator Rosa, which hangs in the same apartment.

Two admirable productions of Carlo Dolci, of very different characters, shared my next attention. The first presented our Saviour bearing his cross. I was particularly struck with the delicacy of execution in the livid hue, which the burden of a cross, and the anguish of a crown of thorns must naturally induce. The second was a St. Agnes the Martyr, in whose countenance the painter had contrived to introduce such touches of sweetness, that I could have gazed upon it for ever.

Two paintings of Schalken interested me greatly. The first represented “ *la lumiere*
“ *vraiment*

“vraiment soufflée,” or “the candle actually blown out.” This is one of the pleasantest things I ever saw. A girl is pictured as holding in her hand a lighted candle, which a boy endeavours to blow out, and she—by a counter-action of breath—to recover. The boy’s lungs are, however, too strong for the girl’s resistance: he gives a steady blast, and the candle is seen upon the point of losing its flame. All these circumstances and effects, with the corresponding fluctuations of light and shade, are rendered with inimitable accuracy.

The second of this master was of a more serious description, and represented “the wise and foolish virgins.” The painter has chosen the moment, when the call is heard of, “Behold the Bridegroom cometh! Go ye out to meet him.”—The wise virgins are described, as obeying with promptitude the summons; their countenances wear the air of confidence, and speak the language of preparation. Their lamps are

VOL. I. L trimmed,

trimmed, the lights are brilliant, and they appear to have heard the sudden call without fear or surprize. On the other hand, a greater scene of confusion and derangement cannot be imagined, than that in which the foolish virgins are found. Their air is that of persons perplexed and disconcerted : some of their lamps are already out, in others the light is expiring. They are busied in fruitless endeavours to preserve the fading, or rekindle the extinguished flame. The agitation, with which they supplicate a supply of oil from their wiser companions, is extreme. Those latter regard their ill-timed petitions with looks expressive of astonishment at their improvidence, and inability to supply them. This is surely a master-piece of painting for the artful disposition of lights, and the strong delineation of circumstance and character.

The beauteous groupe of the Holy Family, by Raphael, came unfortunately too late to produce its perfect effect. Schalken
had

had full possession of me,—and while diligent to study the chaster lights of that perfect master, the flashes of the Dutchman danced like a meteor before my eyes. Such is the influence of first impressions on future habits; and—to indulge a transient moral reflection—he has ill studied life and nature, who shall think it indifferent, which of two opposing principles shall have been the *first* inculcated.

L E T T E R · XXX.

Coblentz, May 30, 1791.

C O L O G N E was the first town we entered after leaving the post-house from which I last wrote. It is a very antient and dignified city. The Romans knew it by the distinction of Colonia Agrippina; and it has been besieged and plundered as often as its rank and dignity demanded. Would you wish for more honours? It is an Hanse

town, possesses an university, boasts an archbishopric, a principality, and a thousand other important appendages. The city is of wide extent ; its churches are numerous and splendid, its fortifications strong, and its inhabitants civil and obliging. You will, by this time, assuredly allow, that I have not made a bad use of my time, in learning so much of the history and manners of a town, in which I passed *four hours*.

Before we entered Cologne, we had to pass the Rhine. Ourselves and equipage were embarked in a large ferry-boat, and quickly whirled across. The inn, where we stopped, abounded in German barons and French counts : a peep at the cathedral, and a stroll about the streets, were all the actual observations I had opportunity to make.

We passed the night, and a considerable portion of the following day at Bonn, which, in respect of situation, far surpasses Cologne. The palace of the Elector commands

mands a very fine landscape of mountainous country, and, at the time I entered the gardens, a groupe of velvet suits—retired from the *ennui* of the drawing-room—were cooling themselves with a *promenade*. I attended the mummary of the cathedral—a mixed emotion of indignation and respect possessed me; and I knew not whether most to despise the absurdity of the worship, or admire the devotion of the worshippers.

The village where we passed last night is called Remangen, between four and five leagues distant from Bonn. The country now begins to wear an interesting appearance, and the road which conducted us from Bonn to Remangen was distinguished by beauties of a peculiar nature—mountains on the one hand clothed with vineyards, the Rhine flowing in silent majesty on the other.

The approach to Remangen was marked with circumstances of singular sublimity. The road passed under a rock, upon whose

bosom were thrown, as it were in rude confusion, houses and vineyards; and from whose shady summit glittered the spire of a church. This mass of rock over-arched the road, which was here very narrow; and the whole appeared to project in formidable magnificence over the Rhine that rolled below. I strolled in the evening over these picturesque scenes; and, seated upon the heights, was charmed with the landscape softened by the last tints of the setting sun, and the harmony of three rustic voices, which sung a *trio* upon the rocks below me—a practice very frequent among the Germans.

We left Remangen the ensuing morning, and passed through a continuation of that scenery I have described, but still improving in beauty. The mountains to our right were of considerable magnitude, and shaped in various forms; yet all appeared in an high state of fertility and culture. Andernach, where we breakfasted, is a curious
remnant

remnant of antient strength. It is surrounded by ramparts mounted with a covert way, by which one can make the tour of the whole place, and view from a sufficient eminence the houses beneath. I know not the history of this place, but judge, from the magnitude of its fortifications, that it has once been of considerable note, and not unfrequently the seat of war. My mind was occupied by serious reflections, when I trod among its ruins, and counted its dilapidated towers. “ And such, said I, is human grandeur, and such the boasted monuments of arms and heroism—” I had continued my reverie, but the crack of the whip announced the moment of departure; and I was dragged in sullen silence to the place from which I now write.

LETTER XXXI.

Mayence, June 2, 1791.

SITUATED at the confluence of the Rhine and Moselle, and flanked with mountains overspread with shrubs and ruins, Coblenz presents a very charming picture to the traveller's eye. I have kept a tolerable look-out upon the countenances of the fair-sex as I ascended the Rhine, and have found their beauty upon the increase as I advanced into the country.

The dresses of the men are stiff, formal, gothic. It is truly ridiculous to look from the window upon the bag-wigs, swords, and chapeaus-bras that pass. I told you above of mountains and ruins that entered into the scenery of Coblenz; but crossing the Rhine to the opposite vineyards,

yards, the fairy visions faded, the objects grew less interesting in proportion as they were more nearly viewed; and my difficulties increased, when I had flattered myself with the idea of conquering them. After encountering much heat and fatigue, I relinquished my project, and retired to my old station. Thus, like the greater part of human prospects, these distant delights appeared to advantage only in the expectation.

There are two evils in travelling, for which a man must prepare himself with fortitude,—a change of language, and of money. This latter is extremely perplexing in running through the different Electorates and Principalities. Every transition of half a dozen leagues has introduced us to a people—not indeed of a different speech—but of a different coin; and it would require profound skill in calculation to pass without detriment from Dusseldorf to Mayence.

I have

I have viewed the town of Coblentz, and read its history ; but as the first has furnished me with nothing extraordinary, and the second would present to you nothing interesting—I shall neither amuse you with the measurement of its streets, or the detail of its revolutions ; studious to avoid (though not always with success) the foible of those travellers, who, in the hope of giving importance to their temporary journals, forget themselves into historians—while the reader is left to murmur at being introduced to a people, not of modern, but of antient manners.

In the room, then, of erudite intelligence, I shall relate to you two grievous evils, which we experienced at Coblentz,—in the extortion of our landlord, and the desertion of our coachman. The first is an old and uninteresting complaint, the latter has something more of novelty and importance. Our coachman—he, alas ! I mean, who once occupied the office—was known at Brussels,

his

his native town, by the name of Antoine: all our intercourse with him discovered but one *fault*; and one *virtue*. His fault was *obstinacy*—his virtue *universal language*. His obstinacy was cool, phlegmatic, and invincible. It shewed itself in a strict adherence to first habits; and, in defiance of advice and remonstrance, he to the last continued to carry his long green whip like a weeping willow bending solemnly over his right shoulder.

But justice must be done to his *virtue*. As an universal linguist, he served us for guide, interpreter, caterer—and in short, in every possible way of mediation. Such were the powers of his tongue, that he would argue with equal volubility in Dutch, Flemish, French, or German. He turned restive at Coblenz, where he seemed to have found a society he approved; and folding his arms, when summoned to his duty, peremptorily refused us the further services of his whip, and his tongue.

Thus

Thus disappointed, we continued our route, not without difficulty, to this place. We were amused, as we passed, with the varying views of a very fine country, visited some hot springs in our way, and arrived without accident before Mayence at the close of yesterday.

L E T T E R XXXII.

Spire, June 4, 1791.

MA Y E N C E, or, as it is stiled in German orthography, Mentz, is a very fine town. The approach to it from the bridge of boats here thrown across the Rhine is strikingly beautiful. It possesses a very noble quay, extending along the banks of the river ; and is rendered, by its fortifications, capable of a strong defence.

The day after our arrival was the festival of the Ascension, and I attended the celebration of high mass at one of the principal churches.

churches. It was a grand solemnity, accompanied with very excellent music, and the audience very crowded. I was particularly struck with the beautiful countenances of a long range of children, who attended the performance. But what has surprized and diverted me, at this and some other towns through which we have lately passed, is, that boys eight or nine years of age walk the streets with queues literally reaching half way down their legs.

The table d'hôte where we dined was attended by a very brilliant circle of officers and Abbés. The latter appeared of more than ordinary consequence, were dressed in very showy suits, and wore half a dozen stars, crosses, &c. Their hands were wrapped up in very wide ruffles, and their profession was only to be traced in the shortness of their hair.

I have often been led to remark the very striking superiority in accommodation, which a stranger finds in a French society,

above that of every other nation. By whatever name it be called, and from whatever cause it proceed, the attention of a Frenchman to the embarrassment of a stranger is wonderful. I have witnessed on many occasions the exercise of this disposition. At a Dutch table d'hôte, one finds the reverse of this. Business swallows up all: The concerns of the change, the rate of merchandize, the rise and fall of the stocks, are the objects which take place of every consideration; and leave them neither leisure nor inclination to consult the ease, or relieve the embarrassment of a stranger. One is but little bettered at a German table: *themselves* are the parties whom they are anxious to oblige, and their attentions are excited to provide in the best manner for their own entertainment. I shall not draw the comparison between either of these, and what prevails at our public tables in England, lest my national vanity should be humbled by the conclusion.

I was not at a loss to account for the *hauteur* of the ecclesiastics in this town, as the chapter is composed of dignified characters ; and no man can become a canon, till he has proved himself noble four generations deep. The wines drank here were exceedingly good. The richest vineyards are to be found in the neighbourhood ; and Hockheim, which has given name to the Hock, is at no great distance from Mentz.

We employed the close of the day in making a journey of four leagues to Oppenheim, a town no longer of consequence. It stands close upon the Rhine, and is surrounded with scenery of no ordinary beauty. We passed our night here, and advanced the following day through Worms to Mannheim. You will not expect me to describe with minuteness a town where I only took a breakfast. I shall content myself, therefore, with saying, that Worms is a pleasant town, situated about five leagues from Mentz. As to its antient history, you will find

find it more celebrated in ecclesiastical than civil records. Within this town, that intrepid champion of reformation, Martin Luther, made his celebrated defence before the states of the empire.

Our entrance into Manheim was obstructed by some military formalities, and the treatment we received indicated much severity and vigilance. I was very much struck with the beauty of Manheim, whose appearance eclipses, indeed, all the towns I have seen upon the Rhine. On entering the streets, we could discover little besides French officers strolling arm in arm, bearing the white cockade. We very soon learnt, that this place is the rendezvous of the emigrants; that here they are suffered to possess, not only an asylum against danger, but a nursery of vengeance; that here they are indulged with a particular species of protection and countenance; and that hopes the most sanguine are by them entertained of recovering their forfeited domains,

mains, and humbling in their turn those by whom they have been humbled. All the inns were crouded with those dignified Refugees ; and the day after our arrival, great preparations were making to receive the Comte d'Artois.

I could not but reflect, when I saw them assembled on the parade, and considered the impossibility of their return,—how strikingly public justice is executed upon them, as a body, in their proscription. A century past, Germany received into its hospitable bosom, Protestants, exiled by the ancestors of those who are now paying the forfeit of ancient oppressions. So true is it, that the ways of Providence are filled with equity ; and the revolutions of empires resolve themselves into so many dispensations of retributive justice.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

Straßbourg, June 7, 1791.

I TOLD you in my last, that the discipline of Manheim appeared very strict; and I found upon enquiry, that regulations of great severity were enforced. I was cautioned, by the waiter at our inn, when proceeding to walk with my *sword-stick*, to disarm myself before I left the room; as orders the most rigorous had been issued on that subject. I must refer you, for particulars of this beautiful town, to those who have seen more of it; and you will not have any great difficulty in finding descriptions of its palace, its gallery, its squares, and its fortifications. I passed but a day here, and slept at Spire the following evening. There is nothing very remarkable in Spire, excepting

cepting its remote antiquity. It stands about six leagues from Manheim.

The following morning, we entered the province of Alsace. This was announced to us by an Office of the customs, bearing the inscription of "Bureau National," and superscribed "La Loi et Le Roi." We were commanded to halt, and the Officers inspected all our luggage. We were happy to be informed, that this is the sole inconvenience of this nature we shall experience till we quit the kingdom. This, therefore, is one of those improvements in the police of the country, for which we stand indebted to the wisdom of its Reformers. The recollection of what we experienced in Flanders, and of what was practised in France under the old system, disposed us to wish all possible prosperity to the new Government.

Passing the wood, which conducts to the town of Lauterbourg, we were incommoded with a deep and hot sand, and pursued by flies of an extraordinary magnitude. I

was amused with the very sudden change which I discovered in the appearance, the dress, and the air of the inhabitants, in passing from the head-quarters of Aristocracy. The people all wear, without exception, the national cockade ; and each town has its *Garde Nationale*. I never saw people more at their ease. They appear not yet to have recovered from those paroxysms of transport, into which the Revolution first threw them ; and they are frolicking without apprehension, at a time when the exiled noblesse are plotting schemes for their destruction, at the distance of half a dozen leagues from their frontier.

The town of Lauterbourg was enlivened by the notes of military music ; and the popular air of “ *Ca ira* ” resounded in every street. The wine in this town was delicious, and appeared more abundant than we had yet seen it. We rose at an early hour, and made a journey of twelve leagues, which brought us to Strasbourg. The heat continued

continued to persecute us all this day, but we found relief by bathing in the Rhine.

Our entrance into Strasbourg was obstructed for a short time by the demand of a passport. Against this we stood out with some violence, perceiving the object of the officer was to obtain a fee, and were at length victorious. So difficult is it for the wisest and best regulations to defeat, in every instance, the attempts of corruption. The heavings of subdued oppression will occasion some temporary interruption; but truth, justice, and order will finally triumph.

I have, I believe, omitted in its place to mention, that our route from Coblantz was obstructed by a long religious procession. A very large cross was borne at the head of those devotees: priests in surplices succeeded; and a promiscuous throng of men, women, and children brought up the rear. They chaunted—as the procession moved—various services; and produced a very agreeable harmony. We had some dif-

ficulty to pass them; and soon encountered a second sett, who were descending the hill to meet them, and chaunting their matins with the same musical solemnity. The picturesque scenes through which we were passing, received an interesting colouring from those ceremonies of superstitious devotion.

My mind is, indeed, full of the varied imagery, which a rapid movement through such an extent of country has introduced, I have a thousand pictures continually before me, of lofty mountains and level plains, of craggy rocks and cultured fields; but the succession has been so quick, that I can hardly review them with distinctness. You will have much to supply, as you travel with me, from the histories of those who have gone before. Such observations as circumstances suggest, shall be duly registered as I pass; and so much shall be recorded for your entertainment, as the current of thought may at that moment supply; but I pretend to
answer

answer for no higher amusement than can be found in the imperfect colourings of a rapid pencil—faithful rather to the idea impressed, than to the subject which may give it birth.

L E T T E R XXXIV.

Bâle, June 10, 1791.

WHAT a stupendous event is this Revolution! The evil which has baffled ages of resistance, and which seemed to know no limits of duration, has in a moment vanished. Surely, it is an interesting sight to contemplate upon the spot, those changes which have taken place upon a people, bound in the chain of immemorial tyranny. There is something so novel in the phraseology now employed, that the very language seems animated by the Revolutionary spirit. Liberty, Law, Constitution, Rights

of men, are terms indeed of no new creation ; but they had slept for ever in the cabinets of the learned, if the event—now the subject of universal celebration—had not awakened them into life and action.

I told you in my last, that we entered Strasbourg on the evening of the 6th. The following morning I amused myself in examining the different parts of the town. You have heard sufficiently of the Cathedral, its brazen gates, its stupendous tower, its wonderful clock, &c. On those subjects nothing can be added ; but the temper of the people has assumed a new feature ; and those long conversant with the country, are alone competent to tell,—how great are the changes which have been introduced into the manners, the sentiments, and conversation of the French,

For myself, who have not had that advantage,—I find it tolerably supplied by the intercourse I held with the Emigrants at Brussels, upon whom no change whatever
had

had passed, except a transient chagrin, which yielded to the first occasion of merriment. I find a very striking contrast between the manners of the Revolutionists and the Aristocrats. The turn of politics which the first have adopted has consolidated very greatly their natural vivacity, and reduced the buoyancy of their former levities to an agreeable humour.

All is political at Strasbourg. The corner of every street is covered with *Programmas*, and the walls of every church decorated with Proclamations and Decrees. The greater part of the latter, advertise the sale of the national effects. It is very gratifying to see, how rationally the language of the Preamble is worded; and what just modifications of expression now convey the sanction of royal authority: “Louis XVI. “ par la grace de Dieu et la loi constitutionnelle de l’état, Roi de François, salut. “ L’Assemblée Nationale a decretée, et nous “ voulons et ordonnons,” &c.—O Spirit of Louis XIV! what a contrast does this
present

present to the ancient form of the Royal decrees ; and what a complete reformation of system does it bespeak, in those who *will*, and those who *obey* !—One scarcely walks twenty yards now, without meeting in places of public observation—a declaration of civil rights ; and all the shops of music and prints, are hung with national ballads and political caricatures.

The counterpart to this, may be read in an extract from one of the late King's letters to Marechal Richelieu : “ Je ne puis
 “ plus differer à faire sentir à mon parlement, que je suis *le maître absolue*,—et que
 “ ma *puissance absolue* vient de DIEU,—et que
 “ je n'en dois compte qu'à *lui*, le jour où il
 “ me retirera de ce monde.” And again, in another letter, he tells him ; “ Je leur ferai
 “ voir, que je ne tiens mon pouvoir que
 “ de DIEU,—que je n'ai de compte à rendre
 “ qu'à *lui*,—et que personne dans mon royaume ne doit s'opposer à ma volonté.” It forms a very interesting speculation to
 bring

bring together those sentiments of a few years past, and the patriotic declarations of the reigning sovereign. Louis XVI. is said to have expressed on every occasion the greatest readiness to accommodate his conduct to the wishes of the nation. “Je ne veux que le bien de mon peuple,” is a sentiment in which he has frequently indulged.

Moore was certainly no mean student of the French character. Perhaps no man ever caught with more accuracy, or rendered with more felicity, “the living manners” of this nation. But he was not endued with the spirit of prophecy. The *steadiest* sight sees *distant* objects darkly and confusedly. Let him speak for himself; “If any of their kings were to behave in such an imprudent and outrageous manner as to occasion a revolt, and if the insurgents actually got the better, I question if they would think of new-modeling the government, and limiting the power of the crown, as was done in Britain.”

“tain at the Revolution, so as to prevent
 “the like abuses for the future. They never
 “would think of going farther, I imagine,
 “than placing another prince of the Bour-
 “bon family upon the throne, with the
 “same power that his predecessor had, and
 “then quietly laying down their arms,
 “satisfied with his royal word, or declara-
 “tion, to govern with more equity.” *Let-
 ter VI. on France.*—Upon such predic-
 tion, the events that have since happened
 are a sufficient commentary.

L E T T E R XXXV.

Basle, June 10, 1791.

THE general complaint at Strasbourg was
 want of money. Nothing is to be
 found in circulation, but paper and copper.
 “Tout iroit bien,” said an old man, “si
 “on avoit de l’argent.” At all the shops,
 the greatest apprehensions are entertained
of

of being paid for their merchandize in paper. This, amongst each other, they are obliged to admit; but in their intercourse with strangers, they struggle very hard for specie.

I turned into the shop of a *Marchande de modes* to purchase some articles. The bargain was struck, the several particulars wrapped up, and I was searching in my pocket for the money; when observing me draw out some paper by accident, she laid immediate hold upon the packet I had purchased, and demanded with haste, “Allez—vous me payer en papier, Monsieur?” “Si fait,” said I. “Eh bien donc,” replied she, “je garderai ma marchandise.” I soon relieved her of the anxiety she felt, and brought a glow upon her cheek, by counting out upon the table the sum agreed. This is indeed the greatest—I had almost said the only—grievance that I have discovered among them; and they scruple not to predict, that the very favourable sale of the national domains will raise the credit of their

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their

their paper, and give them as much money as they have liberty.

I must assure you, that I found the state of the people in this part of France very different from what it had been represented. At Manheim and Worms, reports prevailed of the most serious tumults now reigning in France; and we were more than once cautioned against trusting ourselves amongst a *canaille*, who would hang us up at the lamp-post for a word or a look. This statement has so little connection with truth, that every thing passes with the utmost order; and, so far as I can judge from observation and report, freedom of remark encounters less danger here than at the court of Manheim. Nothing could surpass the strictness which prevailed in every quarter where the fugitive nobility are received; and if I might draw conclusions respecting the country at large from what I see around me, restraint of opinion is exiled with those who owed to its ~~existence~~ their guilty pre-eminence.

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The day after our arrival, was rendered festive by a new enrolment of National guards. This was formed out of the citizens over the age of eighteen years, and was effected without the least symptom of disorder. Beside the guard thus regularly embodied, the citizens are seen every evening in different parts of the town, learning, against an emergency, the use of arms. It certainly is animating to read, in a thousand conspicuous places, proclamations setting forth the right of private judgment; allowing to every man the free exercise of his opinion in matters of religion; and establishing to each individual the liberty of adopting that mode of worship he best approves.

This would, however, be nugatory and ridiculous, were the slightest encouragement given to contumacy and disorder. This has been said *out* of the country; but the contrary has appeared wherever I have enquired. I read upon the door of the cathedral

thedral at Straßbourg an advertisement, which stated, " That a young man having " behaved improperly in the Cathedral during the performance of divine service ; " and, after admonition from the centinel, " persisted in a conduct *unbecoming the solemnity of the place and occasion*, was, by " the officers of the police, sentenced to imprisonment for this *insult offered to religious " worship.*" This accords but ill with a toleration of disorder.

Before I left Straßbourg, I visited the mausoleum of Marechal Saxe, at the church of St. Thomas ; and had an offer of seeing the National armoury, but it came too late to serve me. We reached Colmar in the evening, after a journey of sixteen leagues. Yesterday we made a very fatiguing one of fourteen leagues, and reached Basle in the evening. The heat and the dust were excessively troublesome. It was not without difficulty that we procured a basin of milk at a village where the horses were baited.

Coffee

Coffee is in general abundant in these parts of the country; and this is one of the first instances of distress which we have experienced upon the article of breakfast.

At the village of Mulhausen, eight leagues from Colmar, we alighted to dine. The house was ordinary; and four travellers, wrapped in white night-caps, apparently of mean condition, were about to commence their meal. I enquired of the hostess, if we could be also accommodated with a dinner. She told me with an air of great unconcern, that we might dine with those gentlemen; or—if that did not please us—we might take what they left; for that was the whole that her kitchen could produce. We did not long deliberate upon the choice which our landlady had given us. The dinner was indeed better than the company. They were Germans, except one,—who conversed with us in French, and asked me many questions respecting the opinions entertained abroad of their Revolution. I told

VOL. I. N. him,

him, I had seen many Aristocrats at Mannheim. He asked me, if they had raised any troops? I told him, No; there were none but Officers. “ Ah, ma foi, Monsieur,” said he, “ une armée d’officiers s’avancera “ peu.” Another, with whom I afterwards conversed, declaimed with some violence against the propriety of Alsace being continued under the French government: “ On nous fait payer,” said he, “ 80,000 “ livres pour être François; et c’est payer “ assez cher, le *privilege* d’être gouverné par “ des *etrangers*.”

L E T T E R XXXVI.

Basle, June 11, 1791.

WE entered Basle at what would elsewhere be called eight, but what is here called nine, o’clock. I have never yet heard a satisfactory account of this advance of an hour in the time of the day, or what
were

were the real circumstances that occasioned it. An old traveller, who passed this way near two hundred years ago, reports of it, that a conspiracy had been formed to betray the city, and that the false striking of the clock disconcerted the plot. He further says, that they preserved a certain stone, called the *Heißeine*, upon which the heads of the consuls and other conspirators were struck off; unluckily adding, however, that people were not agreed upon this piece of history,—and that some referred the advance of the clock to a design of hastening the proceedings of the council. It is, however, a curious circumstance, to see a whole city one complete hour in all their transactions before their neighbours; and to a stranger, it occasions some embarrassment, as the sun will neither rise nor set in conformity to the decrees of Basle.

The hotel of the Three Kings is that to which all the world goes; and I should suppose there is not a pleasanter Inn in Eu-

rope. Situated on the western banks of the Rhine, it commands a delightful view; and the saloon appropriated to the table d'hôte is the most cheerful apartment I ever was in. The walls are hung with various engravings, representing some of the choicest scenery in Switzerland. The Rhine is here in its greatest beauty, and fills a wider bed between this place and Strasbourg, than in any other part of its course. Nothing can surpass its colouring. The sea, in all its azure and serenity, can alone furnish a parallel to the cerulean transparency of its waters. It has considerable rapidity in its descent towards Strasbourg, and the boats which pass thither are broke up and fold. The same is done upon the Rhone and the Danube, it being impracticable, without infinite labour and cost, to bring up a vessel against so strong a current.

The place and the people presented to me an appearance particularly gratifying, by the strong characters every where observable, of
simplicity,

simplicity, cleanliness, and industry. Basle has been a place of no small dignity in the earlier periods of its history; though I question if it ever possessed, in the days of its Imperial grandeur, so solid a prosperity as it now derives from its union with the Cantons of Switzerland. Basle counts among its citizens, several men of eminence in arts and literature. Holben and Buxtorf were once, in their several departments, the ornaments of this town; and the great Erasmus is honoured with a monument in the Cathedral, upon the spot that contains his ashes. In addition to those distinctions, it claims the merit of having invented paper in the year 1417.

I took a walk in the evening through the different parts of the town, which are connected by a bridge over the Rhine. The shops appeared abundant in commodities: every one active in his occupation, and content with his condition. It was sun-set when I returned from my walk; and I

found the shops shut, and the families seated upon benches at the doors of their houses. Here they enjoy the cool breeze of the evening, and relax from the fatigues of the day in cheerful conversation. I found this the case throughout all quarters of the town ; and I seemed to myself passing through a saloon, the company in which was ranged in the highest order on both sides. This favours strongly of ancient and uncorrupt simplicity. Goldsmith has drawn the picture of it in his "Deserted Village." I had the images in my mind before I saw Basle, and was the more gratified in the revival of them, than I should have been by the first impression. Surely the noblest effect of the Muse is to learn to appreciate nature ; and that Poetry is of the highest character, which conveys the faithfullest images of unadulterated life. It is on this principle that I consider Thomson and Goldsmith, as the oracles of genuine poetry, and the very best instructors of moral

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ral sentiment. What volumes of verse have been written with useless elaboration !

“ To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
“ One native charm, than all the gloss of art.”

L E T T E R XXXVII.

Berne, June 12, 1791.

THE dress of the women at Basle was very singular. Their hair was combed smooth back from the forehead—bound at the crown with a fillet—and brought behind into two plaits of considerable length. These are further lengthened by black ribbons appended to them, which descend almost to their heels. Their countenances, without much beauty, were very pleasant and cheerful. They appeared very affable and unreserved. The generality of them dress in black. This I had at first supposed to be particular to the Black Foresters, but I find it is not confined to them ; and that

the universality of this usage originates in æconomical reasons. The short petticoats—so much the favourite of the *Hollandoise*—is here worn with much greater advantage; and discovers a well-shaped leg, usually adorned with a scarlet stocking, forming—in the opinion of the females of Basle—a fine contrast to the *sombre* shades of their accustomed habit.

I cannot dismiss the article of Basle, without assuring you, that I was never more pleased with a place which pretends to so little. It owes all its beauties to nature and to industry. Its only ornaments are, the landscapes which surround it, and the simple manners of those who inhabit it. Men, women, and children, all appeared engaged in the common cause of enriching its markets, and supporting its commerce. Here are no pastimes for the gay, no indulgences for the vicious: but the heart which can taste of purer pleasures, and rejoice in the felicity of the human race, may here receive

no common gratification, in contemplating a virtuous, a united, and a happy people.

We left Basle in the morning of the 11th, and have arrived at Berne, after a journey of two days. I will endeavour to give you a faint sketch of the country through which we have passed : but eloquent indeed must be that pen, and animated that pencil, which can do adequate justice to such scenes of pre-eminent beauty. As we left Basle, we gradually entered upon a mountainous country, with the Rhine flowing to the left of us. The road continued tolerable, excepting that in different parts it was scattered with loose and inconvenient fragments of stone. The course is serpentine, for the facility of ascent ; and this gives a greater scope for variety in the different landscapes that present themselves.

At Liestal, where we rested during the heat of the day, the mountains appeared to gather round us. I was induced, by the singular appearance of one of these, to
make

make an ineffectual attempt at reaching its summit, by catching at the roots, shrubs, and masses of stone which covered its surface. From Liestal we entered upon a route which exhibited to our eyes the grandest pictures imaginable. Mountains piled on mountains seemed to inclose us on all hands. These were of various forms and complexions. Some rose in conical beauty; others presented aspects more rude and majestic. Some were clothed with verdure; others with dusky umbrage; and others, displaying their bosoms of naked flint, seemed to set vegetation and culture at defiance. The road in many parts pierces these rocks; among which, as you pass, you hear the roar of waters—descending from precipice to precipice; and trace, among the stupendous scenery, the hut that protects the peasant from the storm. The approach of Biestal passes over a mountain, esteemed a league in ascent. The entrance to this place was particularly striking. On our
right,

right, were mountains of uncouth form and prodigious height — on our left, vallies clothed with verdure, and scattered with human habitations. It was dusk when we entered, and the sun had given place to the softer shades of twilight.

This morning we left Bieftal, and passed through Soleure to Berne. The scenery increased in beauty and magnificence as we advanced. Soleure is a town of very pleasant appearance, and the Church is a very elegant building. This place is the capital of the Canton which bears its name; is of the Catholic religion, and the ordinary residence of the French ambaffador to the Helvetic Union. It being Sunday, all the villagers and inhabitants of the town were parading in groups, with their short cloaths and their scarlet stockings. At the table d'hôte there were many Emigrants; but no articles of intelligence transpired. Our object was to reach Berne in the evening, which we effected; and the necessity of
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some repose, must plead my excuse for withdrawing myself thus abruptly from your society.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Geneva, June 17, 1791.

THE night of our arrival at Berne we supped at the table d'hôte, and met some agreeable company. Among others, was a Frenchman, who appeared a well-bred man. We asked him some questions respecting Berne. He pictured it in most deplorable colours. "Ah mon Dieu! tout est tranquille ici : il n'y a point de spectacles, ni de café, ni de société." His countenance interpreted very fully the calamitous situation in which he found himself. "Je me mourai!" was his conclusion. He was particularly complimentary upon the English nation as a nation of splendor
and

and amusements. “On y trouve tant de belles choses,” said he; and then began enumerating Bath, Vauxhall, &c. I could not help reflecting on this principle, which seems to enter so universally into the character of a Frenchman. This man was, to appearance, a well-educated man—at least upon the system of French Education;—and he was an exile from his country: yet the *gout* for amusements still continued to prevail over every other feeling; and the Revolution of his country, appeared to him only so far inconvenient,—as it had robbed him of his amusements and his rank.

The situation of Berne is extremely fine. The scenery around it is indeed magnificent. The town is almost encircled by the river Aar; the houses are remarkably well built with Arcades; and the utmost neatness is kept up in every quarter. Berne is not entirely without its amusements. These are principally the pleasures of the Promenade; and perhaps no city in Europe can boast

boast a terrace whose view commands a more sublime collection of natural objects. Our table d'hôte was enlivened, the day after our arrival, by a political disputation upon the interests of Europe; and it was warmly contended, *à l'unanime*, that England should unite with Spain, and strike a blow at the Empress of Russia.

We encountered at table, in the evening, one of those inquisitive characters who offer no small annoyance to strangers. He was a man of a certain age, but of a most voluble tongue. He attacked us the moment we were seated, with a succession of interrogatories, of "What place we came from?—Which way we were going?—Whether we had made the tour of Switzerland, or whether we intended it?" and then began, unasked, to give us his advice. He insisted upon it, we *must* make an excursion in the neighbourhood of Berne—that we must *not* content ourselves with ~~the~~ direct route to Geneva—and enumerated

merated a variety of objects to which we *ought* to attend. Finding the answers we gave, were not likely to silence him—we began to be more laconic in our replies. This induced a calm of a few minutes ; when, turning his head from us, he broke out aloud with, “ D’où venez-vous, Monsieur ? ” to an officer at the further end of the room. A Frenchman makes great allowance for frivolous enquiry—The officer replied with the utmost readiness to this first question, and to those which succeeded ; and thus we became perfectly acquainted with his history. “ Où allez-vous ?—Quand partez-vous ?—Etes-vous marié ?—Madame doit être malheureuse pendant votre absence.” Such was the nature of his attack upon the officer.

I feared the arrival of supper would bring our affairs again into play : and it happened just as I had surmised. He took his chair by me, and renewed the charge, with the same persevering curiosity, during

the whole of the session. “Eh bien, vous
 “allez à Geneve. Il faut, cependant, faire
 “des petites tours ; ou bien, il faut revenir
 “à Berne. Comptez-vous rester à Geneve ?
 “J’y serai en quinze jours-moi. Je serai
 “mortifié de ne pas vous trouver.” Such
 were the persecutions I experienced during
 supper. Fortunately for me, he recollected
 that a gentleman, who sat opposite him,
 had not yet been catechized. He opened
 the trenches against him, and drew out in
 a few seconds the whole of his history.
 We took advantage of this diversion made
 in our favour, and withdrew ourselves
 from his farther importunities. I had Ho-
 race full in my recollection, during this
 adventure ; and when he opened his at-
 tack upon me, with “Comment vous va-
 “t-il, mon cher ?” I thought I heard,
 “Quid agis dulcissime rerum ?”

We left Berne the following morning ;
 and dining at the charming town of Morat,
 passed in the evening to Paliere ; where we

had some difficulty to find accommodations —such were the numbers of French emigrants who are on their way to Worms and Manheim. From Paliere we proceeded early the next day, and arrived by the setting of the sun at Lausanne. It was not our intention to make any stay at Lausanne; and as the journey from Brussels had been long and fatiguing, we hastened to the place of our destination. Reposing therefore the night at Lausanne, we made our last day's journey, in the finest weather and upon such a road as we have not before witnessed, and arrived yesterday evening at Geneva. Here we fix for some time our residence, and such is the general aspect of the country, that I think we may promise ourselves a very agreeable *sejour*.

LETTER XXXIX.

Geneva, June 28, 1791.

I HAVE now been near a fortnight at Geneva, and have little more to report to you than the state of the weather. Our mode of life is perfectly reclusive. The scenery with which we are surrounded is the object of our constant contemplation, and our evenings are invariably passed in sauntering upon the banks of the Lake.

Here let me indulge for a moment in drawing some faint outline of this magnificent country. The Lake, which in magnitude is rivalled only by that of Constance, is situated in a valley between the Alps and the Jura, which runs through Switzerland as the Appenine through Italy. The width of this Lake is well proportioned to the height of those mountains which inclose it;

and

and the form of its bed is such as to give scope for all the varieties of scenery. Its waters are deliciously pure, and exhibit—particularly at their issue—the most enchanting transparency.

At the head of this Lake is situated Ville-neuve, at the rectilinear distance of fifteen leagues. Along the banks of the Lake, on either side, are scattered towns and villages, whose magnitude is so reduced by the stupendous mountains which tower behind them, that they appear but clusters of diminutive sheds, and scarcely seem to rise out of the waters. The mountains of which I speak, are those which stand on the side of Savoy, and form a part of the Alps. These present a very noble range of bold and majestic objects: their forms, their magnitude, and their aspect, have every variety necessary to the harmony of the scene. The grand Saleve is the first in order, proceeding from Geneva, which it flanks. This is a mountain of no pre-emi-

ment height. Its surface is covered with an agreeable verdure, and scattered with some cottages in those declivities which approach the town. Its summit exhibits the form of a wedge whose angle is rounded off. Next to this stands the Petit Saleve, which bears a more pointed form, and whose roots approach more nearly the borders of the Lake. The Mole rises next—of a very dusky hue, and conical figure, which contrasts well with the long and uniform appearance of the Voisons standing beyond it. The real figure of the Mole is said to be by no means consonant with its apparent form, which is indeed conveyed to the eye in the strict character of the cone. Here are the mountains which stand along the southern bank of the Lake, and which form to the imagination the rear-guard of the Alps.

Behind these darker masses are ranged the Glaciers, which exhibit through the interstices of the former their lucid summits.

This

This chain of icy substances presents to the eye no uniform appearance: in some of its parts are glassy promontories discovered, shooting their silver points into the clouds. These are known by the name of *Aiguilles*, from the figure they represent. In others the blended snows and ice are swelled into unequal masses, and exhibit different configurations of the most transparent materials. Parent of all—the Mont Blanc—stands clothed in a robe of the purest white, and appears indeed sovereign of the surrounding scenes. The summit of this mountain rises much above the rest; and, though by no means so in reality, has the appearance of a conical figure rounded at its point. Such is the outline of those objects which form the back-ground of this majestic picture; and the softened light which beams at the setting of the sun, paints them to the eye in all the chastest colouring which fancy ever imagined.

The Rhone issues from the Lake at Geneva. This noble river takes its course through the town, and its steep waters exhibit a colouring of the richest blue. The Arve, rolling down its torrent from the snowy Alps, forms its junction with the Rhone in the vicinity of Geneva; and at an angle, which occasions great turbulence to the commixing waters. Our house is situated at some little distance from the town, and our communication with it is not likely to be great. It participates, in common with all the states of Europe, of that political ferment to which France has given birth; and, though the aristocratic party administer the government at present, they are not without apprehensions from the restless activity of their democratic rivals.

L E T T E R X L.

Geneva, July 12, 1791.

SINCE I last wrote, very important intelligence has transpired. The news of the King's flight was very soon conveyed to this place, and every precaution was taken to prevent its operating any mischief in this little republic. All the avenues were beset with guards, to prevent a stranger's passing the territory ; and patrols of horse paraded the whole of the night. I heard some private letters from Paris read, which announced the most perfect unconcern, on the part of the Parisians, at the departure of their king. The conversation in the public places of resort was said to have been, " Le roi a pris la fuite. "—" Eh bien ! " said the rest, " on s'en passera. "

This event, and the subsequent arrest, were variously received here, and in the *Pais de Vaud*. Many of the Genevese assembled every evening upon the promenades, comparing the separate accounts which each had privately received, as many had sons, cousins, or nephews in the national guard of Paris. "Le roi est parti," said one ; "Tant mieux," said an old democrat, "on sera moins embarrassé." The evening after the retaking of the king, the promenade was in singular commotion ; and the people were divided by sentiments of joy and sorrow. "On l'a repri," said one—"Tant pis pour eux," said another—"Apparemment on lui tranchera la tête," said a third. Such were the remarks upon the promenades of Geneva at this event.

At Lausanne, I understood, that political sentiment expressed itself in a more public manner. The news of the king's escape occasioned so great joy at this last place, that the aristocrats—who compose by far the majority

majority—indulged themselves in public illuminations. This triumph was however to undergo a mortification: the king was arrested, and the news was not long in making its way to Lausanne. The democrates would not lose so favourable an opportunity of disturbing their antagonists; they illuminated in their turn, and had the advantage of the laugh on their side.

I have mentioned the promenades at Geneva: they merit indeed more than a simple notice, at least those which are within the walls of the town. But as the gates are shut * irrevocably at half past eight o'clock—a time at which one scarcely begins to find the air sufficiently cool for respiration—I am obliged to confine myself to those walks which lie without the gates. These are frequented of an evening by large companies, with whom I am become in some degree familiarized, without the assistance of letters recommendatory. The grand

* The shutting of the gates is regulated by the hour of sunset.

enquiry on the subject of politics relates to Paine and *Pierce*—by which they mean Price—a name they cannot pronounce. I told them all that I knew about them, *i. e.* just so much as they knew, and all the world knew before—that they were reputed champions of no mean strength in the field of politics.

Of this groupe is a veteran, less distinguished by his own character than by a very elegant daughter, whose personal charms and brilliant conversation have given her much celebrity. Expert in every subject of general interest, she is more particularly attached to political discussion, and has, by her beauty and her principles, acquired the appellation of “*La belle democrate.*” She is very fond of enquiring into the character of the English ladies, for whom she has the highest respect. She wished to know, what particular system of politics the English women now defended. I told her, the ladies with us seldom interfered in political discussion.

cussion. She took it for a rebuke—"Ap-
"paramment Monsieur pense que les dames
"ne doivent pas se meler de la politique."
"Pardonnez moi," said I. Mademoiselle
is often attended upon the promenade by
a German, who appears deeply captivated
with her charms, without however being
fortunate enough to excite a reciprocal pas-
sion. "Il ne fait que parler de la meta-
"physique," says she—"L'amour ne
"s'ouvre pas ordinairement comme ça."
His accent offends her ear. "The Germans
"murder our language," she says, "more
"than any people in Europe." I observed to
her, that the English seldom attained to a just-
ness of pronunciation. "J'en conviens,"
says she, "mais les Allemands travaillent à
"prononcer notre langue, au lieu que vous
"autres ne vous en embarrassez point; et
"j'aime plutôt celui qui ne la prononce pas,
"que celui qui la prononce mal."

L E T T E R. XLI.

Geneva, July 15, 1791.

THE dress of the Genevese is fashioned upon a very agreeable model. The generality of females of every condition are far removed from sickliness or deformity, and those of the higher classes are pleasing in their persons and their manners. Rousseau has indeed charged them with want of parental tenderness, in sending their infants to be nursed, or rather neglected, by the inhabitants of the mountains: but in this, as in other respects, modern Geneva bears little resemblance to the ancient.

The custom of taking a *gouté*, corresponding to our tea, I have not seen elsewhere; though I understand it is not peculiar to this place. I was invited to one of those

repasts by the old patriot, and was surprized to find such variety of eatables at such an hour; it was five o'clock in the afternoon. The moment the company were seated, baskets of bread were handed about; these were followed by anchovies, and tarts of an extraordinary size. In the mean time, coffee, tea, wine, liqueurs, &c. were put in circulation; in so much that I, who had but just risen from dinner, made a very contemptible figure amongst them. "Il me
"semble que les Anglois mangent peu," said one of the company. I replied in the affirmative, to avoid being further solicited. "Ils s'en tiennent beaucoup a leur *rosbeef*," exclaimed another of the party, who had destroyed a host of eatables. At the sound of *rosbeef*, Mons. A. seemed suddenly struck; and apologizing for not having provided *rosbeef* for my *gouté*, insisted upon my consenting to dine with him at noon on the following Sunday. I waited on him the day appointed, and was much amused with
my

my entertainment. A variety of articles were served up; and I was urged to feast upon soup, dishes of rice, &c. till I had quite lost sight of the grand desideratum. At length, when the desert should have come, enters a piece of roast beef of an immoderate size. It was diverting to see the bustle it created among the company, whose eyes were fixed alternately on *me* and the *beef*; and each appeared to wait with anxious curiosity the havoc my appetite was to make upon this huge mass of flesh. Nothing but the very marked intention of gratifying me, prevented my resisting their intreaties *in toto*: and their disappointment was so great at the very small progress I made, that I question if Monsieur will ever think it worth his while to consult again the palate of an Englishman.

The great festivities here are on the Sunday; and, notwithstanding the strict devotion which prevails during three parts of the day, the evening is celebrated with the
most

most cheerful gaieties. The principal amusement is upon the Lake, which is usually covered with pleasure-boats, and affords a very delightful spectacle. Some of these boats are of a very considerable size, and are decorated with very brilliant ornaments. In these they amuse themselves with music, dancing, and playing off fireworks—principally those of a violent explosion. The reverberation of this, from the vast chain of mountains which surround the Lake, resembles very accurately the rolling of thunder, and is listened to with the most eager attention.

This little republic is not without its political ferments. It should seem, from their numerous precautions, that some great danger was apprehended. The orders of the Syndics are unusually strict. The vigilance of the magistrates and the bourgeois-guard is unremitting. For greater security, the gate, which formerly faced the Swiss quarter, has been within these two or three

weeks, with great labour and expence, turned towards the French territory : whence, it should seem, that hostilities were eventually expected. During the whole affair of the king's flight, every species of caution was employed ; and the circumspection which this government thought necessary, to exercise on that occasion, convinces me that they conceive much of their own security to depend upon the particular turn of French affairs. Their fortifications are undergoing repair ; the inhabitants have lately been inrolled ; and all the measures which vigilance can dictate, are now put in practice, with a view to guard against the designs of the democratic minority.

L E T T E R XLII.

Geneva, July 15, 1791.

I RECEIVED yesterday a very high degree of entertainment, and am anxious to report to you the journals of my proceedings. It was, as you will recollect, the commemoration of the French revolution; and, as agreeable to a decree of the National Assembly, the day was to be celebrated throughout France. Ferney, the ancient residence of Voltaire, was among the number of those towns which announced an intention of observing this anniversary. I had for some time past determined upon making a visit to Ferney, in order to view the mansion once occupied by this illustrious man; and my curiosity to witness this extraordinary festival, decided me to put my plan in execution on this day. I knew not the state of the place; nor could foresee, whether my person might be safe among a number of

men, assembled to celebrate the orgies of Liberty and Bacchus. I was unwilling therefore to be a solitary guest, and an order of council had been issued forbidding any subject of the Republic to be found at Ferney during this festival. I shortly however picked up an Englishman, of whom I had some slight knowledge; and who, though profoundly ignorant of the language, had as much curiosity as was necessary for my purpose. We placed severally a cockade in our hats, and drove to Ferney.

The village wore a very gay appearance: all the inhabitants, and many from the environs, were parading in numerous parties, dressed in all the trappings of their Sunday wardrobes. Having found with some difficulty a stand for our whiskey and horse, we repaired to a part of the town, which from the crowds assembled there seemed to be the place of rendezvous. We passed through many ranks of spectators, and came to a large area, in the centre of which was
elevated

elevated the national standard, and the colours inscribed with—"Vivre libre, ou mourir," were streaming in the air. This space was not inclosed with any fixed barrier, but preserved for the company by the National guard; who acted alternately as centinels, and kept the line unbroken by the spectators. Within this area were two long tables, very nearly filled with company, and two smaller ones, occupied by select parties. At the head of the *upper* table sat the Commandant; and beside him, the lady president. The rest were for the most part officers of the guard, or, what is the same thing, volunteers; for the duties and the honours are taken in rotation. I understood from some of the attendants, that we should find no difficulty in being admitted to the table. I therefore applied to a very genteel man, who was doing the duty of centinel, for permission to sit at the table. He assured me, it would do them singular honour. We therefore took our seats, and

were served with some refreshment upon paying our quota.

The attention of the company was soon drawn upon us; and those nearest us at the table were solicitous to recommend themselves by drinking our healths. A band of military music regaled us during dinner. This ended, proclamation was made for silence: and the Commandant delivered an address upon the important advantages of the revolution. After commenting with some warmth upon these, and recommending as essential to their continuance, order and obedience to the constituted authorities, he toasted the magistrates, the national assembly, &c. Every toast was drank with loud acclamations, and accompanied with the music of some popular air. When the Commandant had got through the toasts of office, he demanded silence, and begged leave to drink, "A la santé des Anglois, et nos meilleurs amis." This was received with the loudest bursts of applause. It was
echoed

echoed from every quarter, and the music struck up "*ça ira*;" which was sung by the greater part of the company. The nature of this toast turned the eyes of all upon us; and as my companion was not linguist enough to return the compliment, I mounted the bench. "*Silence le plus profonde*," was called for on all hands; and I proclaimed aloud, "*A la santé des François, succès à la nouvelle constitution, fondée sur des principes éternelles, comme naturelles*." This had its effect: music, shouts, and songs, expressed their sense of gratitude: we were immediately handed by an officer, to the upper table,—presented to the Lady President, who invited us to the ball. Ten thousand courtesies were now shewn us. They threw to the ground the burgundy we had purchased, and gave us in exchange some of the first quality. They spoke in terms of the warmest regard of the English nation, whose example they pretended only to follow; and commended that

generosity, which declined to take advantage of their present distractions.

An officer now hurried us away to drink coffee. I was glad of the opportunity of being relieved from the superabundant civilities of the company. He conducted us to a house where liqueurs, &c. were served up, and many patriotic songs were sung by the different Officers. My friend, who was rather warmed by the burgundy and liqueurs, than enlightened by the conversation, desired me to express to these Frenchmen the respect he had for them: I interpreted his intentions, and all shook hands with him—shouting at the same time, “Bravo, le bon Anglois!” The liqueur was forcible, and the vivacity of the songs animating: these had a mechanical effect upon the humours of my companion. He desired me to assure these Frenchmen, that he loved liberty as much as they did, and that he had an estate in England, but that he would willingly sacrifice it all for the sake
of

of liberty. I again became his interpreter, and his hand was again demanded—with a repetition, in a still higher tone, of “Bravo, le bon Anglois !” The afternoon was indeed passed in the greatest hilarity, and without the least infringement of decorum. Never did I see men whose air, conversation, and gesture discovered more happiness. They harangued, they danced, and omitted no possible expression of gaiety. What particularly struck me in the midst of all this enthusiasm was, that not a term of reproach was used against the king ; nor a sentiment of revenge breathed against those from whose yoke they had so recently escaped. Their feelings seemed to be engrossed by the single consideration of their present felicity, and not an evil passion was suffered to disturb the serenity of their pleasures. Upon the whole, no festival—which had for its object the commemoration of such an event,—could have been conducted with greater harmony, propriety, and good order.

We contrived to withdraw ourselves from the company at the approach of evening, and made a visit to Voltaire's house. This was a gratification I could not refuse myself. The situation is fine; in the house itself there is nothing remarkable. We were shewn the apartment in which Voltaire usually passed his time. This is hung round with the portraits of eminent men, and adorned with the urn containing his heart, which he bequeathed, or pretended to bequeath, to this place. The church and theatre are still in existence,—but all around proclaims the master's fall. Upon returning from Voltaire's villa, we found the gaieties of the ball-room were commencing; but, adopting the prudence of the “conviva satur,” we entered our whiskey for Geneva. As we drove through the town, we were received with shouts, and waving of hats. These compliments we returned in the best manner we could; and bade adieu to Ferney,—not a little satisfied with the adventures of the day.

L E T T E R XLIII.

Lausanne, July 20, 1791.

BY a change of system, our residence at Geneva was shortened by two months, and we are now at Lausanne—or rather in the environs, which are delicious beyond compare. The scenery wants indeed that softness and harmony which the Genevese territory possesses; but then it has to boast magnificence, boldness, and variety. The house we inhabit, is in the village of Ouchy, nearly a mile and half from the town. It is small and rustic, situated within a dozen yards of the Lake, and confronted by the mountains of Savoy, and the rocks of Milerie. Since we have been here, the Lake—which is subject to ebb and flow—has been more than once worked into a storm, and risen to a considerable height. This is a phenomenon for the solution of which
many

many hypotheses have been offered. That most approved is Mr. Bertrand's, who supposes, that electric clouds elevate the waters to various degrees of height, in proportion to the quantity of the electric fluid; and that the subsequent fall, or sinking of the waters—particularly in the narrow parts of the Lake, where these *seiches*, as they are called, are most violent—occasions these sudden storms.

Here is a good circulating library, and gazettes of every kind. But Lausanne is now so much frequented by foreigners, and particularly English,—that every thing peculiar and original is extirpated. In compliance with fashion and interest, every thing is *anglicised*; and you may now have the satisfaction of paying as much for the hire of a horse, a carriage, or a house,—as at the most splendid place of English resort.

Gibbon is the *grand monarque* of literature at Lausanne: I have seen, conversed,
and

and dined with him. These are, I think, the three requisites, in order to know something of a man. His conversation is correct and eloquent; his periods are measured, and his manner of delivering them solemn. He appears rather inditing to an amanuensis, than holding conversation with a stranger. But though he talks too oracularly,—he is at his table cheerful, frank, and convivial. His hospitalities are however not strictly *patriotic*: his predilection for the Swiss is notorious; and, as a love of pre-eminence may not be classed amongst the least of his failings, he seems to have decided well in the choice of his society.

The state of the weather here is remarkably fine, but hot to a degree of suffocation. We purpose taking advantage of this part of the season, and making in a few days a visit to the Glaciers of Chamouni. I have now full in my recollection, the first glimpse I caught of those wonderful regions. It was on my way from Paliere to Lausanne, and

and within about a league of this latter place. We had alighted from our carriage, while the horses ascended a hill ;—and as we approached the summit, one of the most magnificent sights in nature presented itself on a sudden to our astonished eyes : it was a distant view of the Glaciers ; and the unusual appearance they made, would not suffer me to suppose that they were of a solid texture than the fleecy and transparent cloud ;—till the reports of those better acquainted with the country, rectified the errors of an indistinct vision. It was at the close of the day, and all the lustre of a setting sun was playing upon their spotless summits.—The scenery was at once novel, and sublime. I anticipate a thousand pleasures in visiting these singular regions, where an external conflict is kept up between heat and cold ; and mountains of ice experience no sensible diminution from the scorching rays of a solstitial sun.

L E T T E R XLIV.

Lausanne, Aug. 10, 1791.

I AM now returned from a tour among the Glaciers; and what my recollection, aided by an occasional note made on the way, can supply, shall now be penned down for your amusement. It was on Thursday, July 28, that we left Lausanne on this expedition. We composed together a party of seven, not including servants. The morning of the 29th, we left Geneva, at an early hour; and crossing the brook at Chefne, little more than a mile from the town of Geneva, we entered the territory of Savoy. The road to Bonneville, the town where we first halted, became gradually mountainous, and we at length found ourselves at the foot of the Mole. Of this mountain I have before remarked, that its appearance

appearance from Geneva presents a conical form ; but this vanished as we approached : and, agreeable to the testimony of Mr. Saussure, some who have made an expedition to Bonneville in order to examine the Mole, have returned without seeing it—having mistaken for it some other mountain whose figure resembled most nearly the form under which this appears at a distance. We began, in this part of our journey, to enter the land of springs, and the heat being immoderate, often regaled ourselves with draughts from these icy waters. We were dressed in the lightest clothing, yet suffered very much from the scorching rays of the sun, and their reflection from the sides of the mountains. We took some refreshment at Bonneville, and found shelter there for some hours from the fervors of the day. I strolled to the church for amusement, and found it not behind its fellows in faintly dignity. Many caskets were placed upon the different altars, containing *most unquestionable* fragments

ments

ments of ancient worthies. I transcribed from one of these precious repositories the following inscription—I leave the Monk who wrote it, to defend the purity of its concord.
“ Reliquias Sanctæ Vincentiæ ritè cognitæ
“ in hoc capsulo inclusas generationi fide-
“ lium Bonopolis in sacello Sⁱ Petri exponi
“ permittuntur.”

We left Bonneville after reposing two or three hours, and passed by a very singular and romantic route to Salenche. Every possible diversity of scenery is to be found in this latter stage. Springs and cascades issue from the roots of the rocks which inclose the track, or scatter their waters down the shelving sides. The heat raged unabated, till the approach to Salenche gave us a distant view of the Glaciers, whose icy summits afforded—to the imagination at least—some relief. Salenche terminated our journey of the day, and the evening was employed in making the necessary arrangements for our conveyance to Chamouni, and viewing a
cascade

cascade at some little distance; I know not its name. The approach to it was over rough and loose stones, some of which lay so far under the water, that it was problematical whether the feet would alight upon them or not. The cataract gushed from a hollow rock, and was not without its grotesque ornaments; but when the difficulties of egress and regress are calculated, the balance of pleasure preponderates but little in its favour.

From a necessity—to which we were constrained to submit—we were not provided with *char-a-bancs* on the following day till near eleven o'clock. The *char-a-banc* is a small strong carriage, in which two or three may ride. Upon this you sit, with your feet near the ground, resting upon a swinging board, and are drawn sideways. It is surprising how fast the mules trot with these vehicles at their heels, over some of the roughest and most craggy tracks; their feet are at once sure and invulnerable. Our *char-a-bancs*

a-bancs halted at the village of Chede, and we were very greatly entertained with a view of the cascade. The water appeared to fall from a height of about 150 feet: as it descends it is very regularly scattered, till in the lower part of its descent it is dissipated in the gentlest distillation. There was much beauty in this fine cascade, the effect of which is not a little improved by the surrounding scenery. We had lost the hour at which it is viewed to the greatest advantage,—the guides assuring us that had we arrived somewhat sooner, we should have had the pleasure of seeing a rainbow formed upon this transparent shower.—Re-entering our char-a-bancs, we passed over a rough and broken track, blocked up in some parts by hideous masses of rock, intercepted in others by furious torrents that poured from the heights, till we entered upon a charming plain, in which was situated St. Gervais. Here all was gaudy. The Curé had given an entertainment:

mas was just over, and the villagers had commenced their dance. We partook under a tree of the refreshments of the place, and diverted ourselves with seeing these peasants perform the evolutions of the Valz. Shortly after this we entered the valley of Chamouni, and arrived by five o'clock at the foot of the Glacier de Boisons.

L E T T E R XLV.

THE Glacier de Boisons is the first to which strangers are generally introduced. It makes scarcely any figure from the valley, standing among many others of much greater magnitude. Being severally furnished with a long stick pointed with iron, we ascended with ease the lower part of the mountain, which was covered with turf and not very steep; but the approach towards the ice was difficult, and the sticks were eminently useful. Previous to our arrival

rival upon the level with the Mer-de-glace, we were stopped by the guides in order to view the magnificent prospect before us. It presented a range of icy pyramids of the purest complexion, and of the boldest forms: we were filled with astonishment at a spectacle which blended so perfectly the grand and the beautiful.

Arrived at the summit of the mountain, we entered upon the Glacier, but found great difficulty in keeping our feet. The sun had glossed the surface, and rendered it almost impossible to tread with any degree of security. In passing amongst these frozen tracts, we came to many wide chasms and gulphs of a formidable depth. We threw down flakes of ice or stones, whose fall returned a tremendous sound. It was curious to observe upon the highest parts many masses of stone ready to precipitate; and upon the mountains in descending we saw some of dreadful bulk, which had at different times been tumbled from the summit of the Glacier.

Pierre Balmat, our principal guide, related to us, that he was witness to the fall of one of the largest of these; and that it was attended with the most tremendous circumstances. Indeed it appears extraordinary that men should be found to inhabit regions, where they are continually exposed to these impending dangers. All the way as we descended, we observed the ruins of trees whose trunks had been split asunder, or their roots torn from the ground, by the violence of these *Avalanches*. We had suffered but little fatigue by the whole of this expedition; the ice afforded us water of the most refreshing coolness, and strawberries abounded upon the mountain over which we passed on leaving the ice. Evening was now advancing: we re-entered our *char-a-bancs*, and shortly arrived at the Priory of Chamouni.

Pierre Balmat undertook all the necessary arrangements for the business of Montanvert, which we were next to undertake;
and

and the following morning, after an early mass, came to announce that all was in readiness. We were but four who resolved on this expedition; and we began to ascend the mountain, having Pierre Balmat at our head, and another guide bringing up the rear, each charged with their portion of luggage, provision, &c. The first league, or hour as it is called, was rugged, but not steep. It is so much of the way as is usually made by the mules. We began from this boundary to experience some difficulties: the track, without being less rugged, became more steep; and we had occasionally to pass along a precipice, which could not be regarded without dizziness, and from which a false step must inevitably have terminated the journey. The prospect before us annihilated all sense of fear or fatigue; and, after an arduous struggle of about three hours, we gained the summit of the Montanvert, and had the glorious Mer-de-glace full in view.

We had ascended the mountain very lightly clad, and had been much oppressed by heat. The transition was instantaneous to a chilling cold. The guides admonished us to wrap ourselves up speedily, as the air from the Glacier might have a dangerous effect. The Mer-de-glace resembles exactly a billowy expanse of water frozen while the waves were yet swelling with the majesty of the storm. We descended by a rugged path to the level of the ice; and by a proper union of courage and caution, ascended and descended over the vast columns of ice which covered this surface. Wherever the eye ranged, nothing presented itself but objects of terrible grandeur;—precipices, over which hung the loosening rocks—gulphs, where the projected stone could scarcely find a bottom. The whole valley appeared, as still heaving with the tempest. Before I quitted the ice, I cast a parting view at the vast range of rocky spires and columns that

inclosed

inclosed it. To the left, I saw the vale of Chamouni far below ; and to the right, the Glacier extended more than twenty leagues among regions inaccessible to human discovery. I felt an enthusiasm, which is revived in the narration—but which the most elaborate description is ill calculated to communicate.

L E T T E R XLVI.

O U R repast was prepared by the industrious guides in a shed known by the name of Blair's Cabin. It is principally formed by stones, placed without cement upon each other ; and the table is of one single stone. It was, as Balmat reported, erected by a gentleman of the name of Blair, in consequence of a violent hail-storm—not unusual in these regions—from which himself and his friends had suffered. The traveller owes Mr. Blair gratitude for this piece of philanthropy. The interior of this cabin

is covered with a register of names engraved upon the walls by those who have visited these scenes.

Nothing can surpass the intrepidity and zeal of the guides of Chamouni. There are no dangers, however formidable, that they will not face. When Mont Blanc was deemed inaccessible—an opinion which prevailed till within a few years—the exertions of the guides were nevertheless indefatigable. An accident at length unfolded what the labour of years—perhaps of ages—might have explored in vain. The casual wanderings of Jacques Balmat to a considerable height opened to him a track, by which he deemed the ascent practicable. This secret he communicated to Paccard, who had cured him of an illness contracted on the mountain. They agreed to make the attempt, in which they perfectly succeeded Aug. 1786. Upon this M. Sauffure, whose long researches in that particular line had led him to offer rewards for any discoveries of this nature, repaired

repaired to Chamouni the following year; and, with eighteen guides furnished with a tent, provisions, and instruments of observation, ascended, with unparalleled hardihood and extreme danger, Mont Blanc Aug. 1787.

Having finished our repast, and allowed due time for our guides to refresh themselves, we began to descend. The beginning of the descent was not accompanied with any particular difficulties: but the latter part, which pursued a track different from that by which we ascended, was steep and hazardous. We were occasionally startled by the distant rumbling of those Avalanches, which are (particularly during the heats) detaching loose masses of ice or stone, and precipitating them with violent explosion. These mountains are not without their luxuries. We were presented in different stations of the descent with strawberries and goats-milk of delicious flavour, Those who have felt the heat can alone imagine how grateful these refreshments proved.

ed. Having at length effected our descent, we traversed a valley through which flowed the Arveron ;—this, like all the bottoms in the neighbourhood of these mountains, was strewed with those fragments of stone, which once occupied a higher situation. Our guide now conducted us along this uncouth track to one of the noblest objects in nature—the source of the Arveron. It is a recess hollowed out by the hand of nature, and all the colours that enrich it are of her own pencilling. Imagine the openings of a mighty cavern—scooped in the centre—and over-arched by various masses of ice in forms the most wild, yet the most majestic. -- Picture to yourself the purest tints, blending into each other with the most enchanting softness, and the most regular gradation. From the centre of this cave thus artfully formed,—thus sublimely coloured,—imagine a torrent issuing with violence, and tumultuously rolling among masses of rock, which obstruct the channel and spread its

waters into foam. If the picture be not entire, throw into the canvas the surrounding scenery;—the vale of Chamouni decorated in all the charms of industry and culture;—the hoary magnificence of the Glaciers;—and the sombre majesty of those stubborn rocks, which retain no trace of vegetation:—let the setting sun throw his last rays over this groupe;—and then tell me, whether it be enthusiasm to class this with the noblest productions of nature.

I must remark, from some conversation I had this day,—that the Savoyards participate those discontents, which seem to have become so general in Europe. The yoke of the Catholic church is a cause of great dissatisfaction, and they treat with ridicule the idea of papal supremacy. They speak of the riches which the church amasses, as an unmerited exaction from their labours; and even consider the *dîme*, or tithe, as a very high price for occasional absolution. This I was rather surprized to hear: but there is
another

another and very serious subject of discontent, in the preference given by the court to Piedmont, to the prejudice of Savoy. The Savoyards affirm, that they are treated with neglect; that their inferiority is marked by an exclusion from posts of distinction and emolument; and that in all cases where honour, profit, or authority are annexed to any places at the disposal of the government, they have the mortification to see a Piedmontese preferred. The *greatest* ferment prevails in those parts which border on the lake, or connect with Geneva. The frequent communications which these have with the inhabitants of the Pays de Vaud—many of whom are strongly inclined to French principles—have contributed to the diffusion of that spirit of revolt, which reigns among them. At the mineral springs of Thonon and Evian there are occasional fetes, and this keeps up a perpetual intercourse between the Savoyards and the inhabitants of the other side of the lake; and *ça ira*

has been trumpeted at their festive meetings with no small share of applause. The clergy in the neighbourhood of Chamouni are by no means numerous; at Salenche and its environs they abound, and exhibit all the marks of sovereign pride.

At first entering Savoy, I was embarrassed to conceive how the land could be divided; as it discovered no visible partitions. I was however told, that it is parcelled out with great accuracy, and preserved sufficiently distinct,—though in many places by imaginary boundaries. Land is here preferred to every other species of property; each man is emulous of acquiring a portion; and such are the happy manners of the valley—a stick or stone,—the most *trifling* mark serves to define the *meum* and *tuum*;—and, with few exceptions, his property is sacred from violation.

L E T T E R XLVII.

THE evening after our descent from Montanvert, I amused myself with walking about in various parts of the valley, and gazing at the different surrounding objects of magnificence. It was within a quarter of an hour of sun-set that finding myself somewhat fatigued, I stretched along a bank, watching the decline of the sun—now about to retire among the Glaciers. The Aiguille de Midi, the Dome, and Mont Blanc were at that time richly illuminated; and I waited with anxious curiosity the issue. The rays of light gradually passed from the Dome and the Aiguille, till the former was enveloped in shadow, and the points of the latter glittered only at the extremities. All this time Mont Blanc possessed a large portion of solar lustre; and, after the

the

the Aiguilles were enveloped in the gathering shades of evening, the rays of the parting light still rested on the superior mountain.

It was this day determined by four of us to continue our expedition along the valley, and visit as much as should be convenient of this extraordinary country. We were joined the following morning by two other gentlemen, whose intentions co-incided with our own; and under the conduct of Pierre Balmat, severally mounted upon mules, we began at an early hour to ascend the Col-de-Balme. This is a mountain which bounds the valley of Chamouni, and over which is the shortest passage into the Pays de Valais. A more usual, because more practicable track is over the Tête Noire. The ascent of the Col-de-Balme is attended with little difficulty. The greater part is—and all may be—made upon mules. The descent is hideously steep; and, though the track is sufficiently serpentine, yet it is not descended without considerable fatigue.

From

From the summit of this mountain we enjoyed a very noble and extended view. M. Sauffure calculates that it rises 1181 toises, or 7086 English feet, above the level of the Mediterranean. On completing our descent we found ourselves in the valley of Trent, so called from a torrent of that name which issues from a contiguous Glacier. On the highest part of the Col-de-Balme there is a stone, defining the limits of Savoy; and from this land-mark commences the territory of Valais. We turned a little into the valley of Trent, in order to stop at the village of that name, and give some repose to our mules. Our guide conducted us to a small hut, where the good folks did all in their power to entertain us. They succeeded better with the mules than with their riders; for all the effusions of honest hospitality could not atone for the poverty of their fare. They set before us a dish of honey and some bottles of meagre and acid wine.

This

This village is very curiously situated, at the bottom of immense and innumerable mountains,—and composed of an handful of diminutive huts. The largest of these were very little above the size of an ordinary sty, and constructed in a very grotesque style. They resembled a kind of wooden box, set upon four beams, which are laid upon a foundation of uncemented stones; and upon the roots are stones placed, as a provision against the violent winds, which are not unfrequent in these mountainous climes. The people did not appear unhealthy, nor did I see any *goitrous* persons here. The slopes of the mountains bore the marks of industry and fertility: all was simple, and primitive; and we felt our infirmity, when we saw our guides devour as a luxury—what revolted our palates. The shoes of our mules being repaired, and their stomachs replenished, we, passing from Trent over the Forclay, arrived at St. Blanchier in the evening.

L E T T E R XLVIII.

THE passage of the Forclay had nothing in it either formidable, or difficult. Wherever the track passes,—which it did in many places upon the edge of a precipice,—the imagination was amused with a slight fence; which was indeed rather a security against fear, than a protection from danger. The descent was extremely rough, and strewed with a multitude of large and loose stones. It took us up nearly two hours to descend into the valley of Martigny. From the Forclay we enjoyed a very fine view of the city of Sion, the Mont St. Gothard, and the Glaciers of Grindelwald. As our intention was to take Martigny in returning from St. Bernard, we pursued a course to the right from the Forclay; this track described a sort of semi-circle round a hollow vale watered by a river, or rushing torrent, over

which clusters of trees hung in the most romantic forms.

We shortly after entered the valley of Entremont. The road by which we passed, ran along the steep declivities which flanked the valley to the right; and on either hand of us were mountains of correspondent height and magnificence. The Drance—a very powerful torrent which takes its rise from the Glaciers round St. Bernard—rolls down the valley with noisy impetuosity. It was between seven and eight o'clock when we entered the village of St. Blanchier. Our guides conducted us to a species of Inn, where we were to pass the night. We found our landlady very untractable: all our *toute-suites* were coolly returned with *tout-à-l'heures*. We had not however in the issue, reason to complain of any thing but the pertinacity and dilatoriness of our hostess; for in her own good time, an excellent and smoking supper was introduced. Our night passed well, and the morning found us sufficiently

ficiently recovered to resume our march. We obtained some bowls of luscious milk of our landlady, who began to improve upon us by acquaintance; and having mounted our mules, we put ourselves in motion for St. Bernard.

Very soon after issuing from the village of St. Blanchier, we entered upon a part of the valley of Entremont, beautiful beyond description; and this continued with little variation to St. René, a course of three leagues. Between Martigny and St. Blanchier the whole scenery was wild,—the mountains rocky and barren,—and the torrent below us obstructed by prodigious masses of stone. On the contrary, from St. Blanchier to St. Pierre all is smooth, harmonious, fruitful. The mountains are ranged in the noblest and most beautiful forms, and connected with the utmost regularity. Their sides are clothed with a charming verdure of various hues according to the different species of cultivation. The Drance rolls
along

along in one continued stream of foam, and fills the valley with its echoes. I thought, as I beheld these scenes, that the fables of Romance and the visions of Arcadia were more than realized to my senses. My imagination seemed not to experience a want, nor could I figure to myself one absent charm which could improve this wonderful valley. All the varieties of nature were here deliciously blended. Here were viewed all the different shades of verdure, and every artful distribution of culture. Add to these, the sinuous channel of the torrent,—its frothy surface,—its hollow roar,—and then say what is there left for poetry to feign?

Between St. Blanchard and St. Pierre we passed two villages—the first of which is Orfieres, the last Liddes. As we entered the first of these, we passed the Drance by a wooden bridge. They appeared in this part of the valley to be in a way of refinement. Some few houses were undergoing repairs, and fitting up in—what I presume may have

been—the stile of a century past in the civilized parts of the world; and what may pass for modern taste, in a valley, where the visits of the sun are but just long enough for the purposes of existence. It appeared much the fashion along this valley to consecrate the houses by pious inscriptions. I observed upon many doors, which had been lately painted, the names of saints inscribed, or some religious motto. Just upon the part where in a mercantile town would have been advertised the name and occupation of the inhabitant, were inscribed on many doors the three names *Jesus—Marie—Joseph*.

We now passed from Orsieres to Liddes, having the Drance to our right. Liddes is romantically situated in the narrowest part of the valley, the mountains of which approach so near each other as almost to compress and entomb it. In passing through this place, we overtook one of those good industrious Penitents who travel far for the benefit

nefit of their fouls. The pious pilgrim was in a garment refembling that which honeft Bunyan has described his hero to have received from one of the *fhining ones*. It was variegated with the brighteft colours,—adorned with fhells, mottoes, and portraits of the moft fuccefsful interceffors in behalf of thofe who praftife pilgrimage and penance. He bore a tall ftaff, his feet were bare,—that is to fay the upper parts,—and thus he was about to crofs the rugged flints of St. Bernard; in order to vifit the holy fhrine of Loretto, and—in the fpirit of antient fuperftition—“to feek him dead who lives in Paradife.”

L E T T E R XLIX.

IT was about ten o'clock when we entered the village of St. Pierre; and, as the Convent of St. Bernard was but three leagues diftant from this place, we deter-

mined upon making our visit immediately, and returning to St. Pierre in the evening. We requested our hostess to prepare us a supper. The good woman talked of honey and goats-milk;—we questioned her upon the articles of bread and meat; she assured us that there was neither butcher nor baker in the town, but that she would send up to the mountains to kill a sheep for our accommodation. It was indeed our fate, wherever we stopped, to spread slaughter and devastation. We had scarcely entered our quarters at St. Blanchier, when the most dismal screams assailed us from the hen-roost. Scarcely had we quitted St. Pierre, on our route to St. Bernard, before we saw a remorseless clown, deputed to that service by our hostess, scaling the mountain, and seizing the affrighted and defenceless sheep. We blushed for the disorders we had introduced into these Arcadian regions, where all was innocence as in the age of Gold, and the peaceful reign of Saturn. Here the flocks seem-

ed proprietors of the mountains, and the wants of men were satisfied without the effusion of blood ; here the woods appeared sacred to solitude and silence.—

—Where the rude axe with heaved stroke
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.

In leaving St. Pierre the track divides—that to the left, opening into the Valforey ; that to the right, conducting to St. Bernard. From these opposite directions issue two streams, which are severally denominated from the Valforey and the St. Bernard ; and which uniting a little below, form that torrent which pours along the valley of Entremont. St. Pierre is the last village of the Valais in this route ; and from this to the Convent of St. Bernard, they estimate three leagues or hours. Soon after leaving the village, we entered upon a coarse and rugged plain, strewed with fragments of stone, which had been washed down from
the

the heights ; and from this we continued to ascend over rocks of shapeless asperity. In passing these I was indebted to my mule, whose dexterity in running up the steep declivities excited my astonishment, and I ought to add, my gratitude. The most provoking property of these animals is, that they will always coast upon the precipice. I more than once laboured to force my mule to abandon this dangerous system, but he taught me acquiescence, by either making a full stop, or, if I persisted, in betaking himself to a fit of kicking. I am persuaded that no one ever reached the heights of St. Bernard in this mode of travel, without having learnt more of passive obedience and moral resignation, than he would ever have acquired from Sir Robert Filmer, or the Whole Duty of Man.

We had now climbed about two leagues and a half over a very rugged and flinty track, discovered rather by the industry of our guides and the recollection of our mules,

than

than by any vestiges of former footsteps. We at length crossed the torrent which takes its rise a little above us, and now entered upon the most dreary and melancholy scenes. The mountains on every side were rugged and naked, except where the snow continued undissolved the whole of the year, nearly a quarter of a league. Before we reached the Convent, we passed through a track of snow, many parts of which were more than a foot deep. This snow liquidates very slowly : it is a part of the mountain exposed to the north, and which enjoys but for a few moments the rays of the sun. A few years past it continued undissolved the whole of the summer; and the pious fathers began to feel alarm, lest it should accumulate and form a Glacier.

We arrived by three o'clock at the door of the Convent. Our guide demanded admittance, when one of the order came to the door, and invited us to enter and partake of the refreshment of their "pauvre hospice."

hospice." He was indeed particularly sorry it should have been a day of penance, and feared lest the kitchen could not afford us a suitable repast. He accompanied us over the Convent, showed us the several apartments, library, chapel, &c. We were seated in a gloomy saloon, after due observation of the rarities of the place; and a very frugal meal was served up,—the brother of the order himself waiting upon us. We urged him to partake with us—he excused himself, by saying—that he had dined at their usual hour of half past ten. We entreated him not to stand; he resisted our entreaties, by assuring us—that it became him, and supplicating us to receive the hospitalities of the Convent “au nom de Dieu”

L E T T E R L.

O U R venerable host had, in the interval of preparation for dinner, conducted us round the environs of the Convent, and wretched indeed was the scenery which surrounded these pious fathers. The whole mountain is of so obdurate and untractable a nature, that no art or labour can render it a subject of cultivation. There were two or three small interstices between the rocks, in which these industrious men had disposed some mould imported from the soil of St. Pierre; by means of which—with the greatest difficulty—they raise a few vegetables. The whole crop would have scarcely filled an ordinary plate: but elevated into these regions of cold and solitude, they have recourse to any little expedient which may occupy their hopes, and dissipate the *ennui* of perpetual imprisonment. Theirs is indeed
a fate,

a fate, though self-imposed, beyond the rigors of the severest punishment.

—— From the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with an universal blank
Of Nature's works, to them expunged and rased.

The good father who performed the honours of the place, told us, that he had been twelve years in this Convent; and, though he was not in reality more than thirty years of age, his countenance was so haggard, so fallow, and so sickly, that he appeared quite a veteran. We asked him after the rest of his comrades; he said, they were gone "se promener."—It is diverting to hear of a promenande, in regions where every step leads to fresh dangers, and every change of scene is only an aggravation of horrors. He spoke of a journey to St. Pierre, as a boy would of his holidays; and made as much of an excursion to Martigny, as an Englishman would of a trip to Newmarket.—"On y va," said he, "des fois pour-s'égayer."

He

He shewed us a small lake near the Convent, in which they had attempted to keep some fish; but the coldness of the water almost instantly killed them. This lake is, he said, seldom free from ice, and was frozen over last year so late as the month of August. Indeed the water he gave us to mix with our wine was prodigiously cold. He assured us it was two degrees below the standard of freezing. We were shewn a spot upon which once stood a temple of no mean fame, and the ground is still scattered with fragments of stone.

It has been a subject of much dispute among the learned what route Hannibal pursued in crossing the Alps. An attempt has been made from the evidence collected on these ruins, to fix this route in the passage over St. Bernard. This opinion is not new, as M. Saussure has remarked. It was prevalent in the time of Livy, and he opposes it as destitute of foundation. Pliny was afterwards of opinion, that he passed

by the Mons Jovis, or Penninus. The latter of these appellations is referred to the Celtic word *Pen*, which signifies high. M. Saussure speaks of numerous ex-votos, which he has himself seen; the greater part of which are of bronze, and bear inscribed, some, JOVI PENNINO; others, JOVI POENINO. From the latter of these it has been concluded, that Hannibal erected a temple here to the God of his country, in testimony of gratitude for the discovery of the passage. The statue of the Jupiter in question, is proved to have been destroyed by Constantine, from a pillar which now stands at the foot of the mountain at St. Pierre: it is inscribed to Constantine the younger.

St. Bernard was a Savoyard, and arch-deacon of Aoste in the year 962. Since his time the *hospice* has been twice destroyed by fire. This institution was formerly very opulent; it possessed lands in Sicily, England, the Low Countries, &c. of which it is
now

now pretty well shorn. For its support at present, it is in great measure indebted to the alms collected in different parts of the country. There is upon the mountain near the Convent, a stone, which marks the boundary of the Vallais on the one side, and the king of Sardinia's estates on the other. The contiguity of this Convent to the latter has produced some altercations; and, at the beginning of this century, the king of Sardinia disputed with the Swiss the right of nominating a Provost, or Head. This, after much opposition, was decided in favour of the Swiss; who deemed it of importance, that a foreign king should not nominate to a benefice within their dominions,—particularly to one so important, as that of St. Bernard has always been esteemed.

I know not the precise number of this society: they are all regular Augustines: the Provost is elected by the Chapter, and confirmed by the Pope. He resides at Martigny. Next to him, is a Prieur Claustral, who

acts as President, and resides at the Convent. Besides these, there is a Sacristan, who has the care of the chapel; a Cellerier, who superintends the provisions; a Clavandier, who distributes to travellers; and an Infirmer, who takes charge of the sick. Usually not more than eight or ten reside; and powerful must be that motive which determines men, who can exist elsewhere, to such a mode of life.

L E T T E R LI.

THE principal duties of these Bernardines fall in the season when snows and storms are most frequent. At that time they are constantly in the habits of watching occasions for the exercise of their hospitable functions: a servant, whom they call the Maronnier, goes before the travellers, who pass this way during the perilous season, with a large dog, peculiar to the mountain. This dog is of an enormous size, and of
singular

singular sagacity. We saw two of them at the Convent. These dogs have the wonderful talent of discovering the way through fogs and snows, as also of scenting out the bodies of those who have perished by the severity of the cold. During the whole of the winter, the brothers at the Convent are employed in searching for miserable objects who have lost their way, or have been buried in the snows, by the terrible *avalanches* which happen in the severe season. Each is furnished with a stick pointed with iron. With these they sound, wherever the dogs direct; and by shaking, chafing, and other remedies, they frequently restore those who are fortunate enough to be found before animation is totally extinct.

The height of this mountain is estimated at about 7542 English feet perpendicular above the level of the Mediterranean. The nature of their situation exposes them to a thousand maladies. Indeed they looked like the family of death. It was so cold in the Convent, that they requested permission to kindle a

fire for us ; and yet it was the third of August. I confess to you, I could not view their situation, nor hear the detail of their sufferings, without asking myself the question, whether the services rendered to society by these men were at all proportioned to the pain with which they are effected. I am of opinion that few would, in modern days, undertake a pilgrimage over St. Bernard, if they were not sure of *three* * days entertainment on the way : and I cannot think highly of an institution calculated only to keep alive an almost obsolete superstition. M. Sauffure has taken some pains to defend this institution in its present state ; and certainly if, as this author affirms, the passage of St. Bernard is of great importance to the Vallais on one side, and the Lombards on the other ; if the communication between these two divided countries be of such reciprocal advantage ; the labours of these religious, and their

* So much is allowed by charter to every pilgrim.

seclusion from society, merit the approbation of the world.

There was something so unusually dreary and ungenial in the aspect of this place, that we were impatient, after due gratification of our curiosity, to leave it. We had ordered our mules; and while these were preparing, the skies blackened prodigiously, and a heavy storm of hail and thunder came on. The monks were urgent with us to pass the night in the Convent; but we were unanimous in wishing to take our leave of these grim and stormy regions. We descended through a deluge of rain, from which we shortly issued, and left behind us the storms and the hail, to drench the Convent of St. Bernard. Doubtless these fathers must be actuated by some powerful principle, in fixing their abode in these regions of misery: by their voluntary sufferings here, they no doubt hope to mitigate the pains of purgatory hereafter. I know not what purgatory is, but I should think

it almost worth hazarding, rather than endure the penance of a residence during life upon the mountains of St. Bernard. Milton has attempted to give us some idea of another place ; and I could not dismiss the images from my recollection, when I turned my eyes upon this miserable scene,

“ A dismal situation, waste and wild ;

“ Regions of sorrow, doleful shades ; where peace

“ And rest can never dwell ;—hope never comes,

“ That comes to all.”

Descending partly upon our feet and partly upon our mules, we arrived in the evening at St. Pierre. The activity of our hostess and her co-adjutors—for it appeared by the bustle that she called in the assistance of the neighbourhood—had prepared our supper. On the following day we had, on our way to St. Blanchier, an opportunity of seeing the full display of mulish resistance. A watch had been left by one of the party at St. Pierre. We were now a full league from the place, and the guide was directed to re-
turn

turn in search of it. The guide prepared to return, but his mule said, "NO."—At every effort the *former* made, the *latter* added his "VETO." He used every measure of violence, but he might as well have attempted to flog the Trojan horse into a gallop. Much manœuvring was displayed on both sides; at length victory declared in favor of the beast, and the great Pierre Balmat—who had so often conquered mountains—was himself compelled to yield to the invincible stubbornness of his mule.

L E T T E R LII.

THE appearance of St. Blanchier is picturesque indeed, but partakes too much of the horrid. It stands upon the borders of the Drance, at the confluence of three vallies, and in the very heart of mountains, which project in awful forms over its cottages, and seem to menace

its destruction. It was a festival with the inhabitants; the church bell was ringing a hollow sound, and the peasants were crowding the porch, in order to consecrate the festivities of the day by an act of devotion. As we passed through this village, we were alarmed by an explosion, the effect of which among the mountains was tremendous. We took it for thunder, and its echoes were prolonged by the reverberation of the rocks with which we were enclosed. A volume of smoke issuing from a distant eminence convinced us, that it was but the report of gunpowder.

Martigny, where we reposed ourselves and mules, is considered as of some importance in the Vallais; they called it a city, and spoke of it in high terms. It has, however, from the figure it makes, no great pretensions to distinction. It is the headquarters indeed of business and gaiety in this country. Our landlord introduced us into a very spacious room, in one corner of which sat a man, whose figure and manner
rather

rather excited our curiosity. We had taken from the table a large pair of flappers, and were severally offering our conjectures upon their use, when, observing our embarrassment, the stranger came up, claimed the flappers, and told us, they were “pour attraper les papillons.”—The inn-keeper informed us when he had retired, that it was a German baron, whose *penchant* for butterfly-hunting was extraordinary; that he exposed himself to a thousand dangers and fatigues in this whimsical pursuit; “et, Messieurs, (continued he,) ce baron là mettroit huit jours pour attraper un seul papillon.”

Our host was a lank meagre man: his figure was remarkably tall, ghastly, and puritanical: his head was crowned with a white cap, which did not diminish the solemnity of his appearance. He harangued us the whole of dinner upon the different pursuits of mankind. He treated the butterfly-hunter with the most sarcastic contempt.—“A fellow, said he, who runs
“ over

“ over bogs, lakes, and brambles after a
 “ shadow;’ a phantom; a being that is not
 “ touched without falling to pieces; a
 “ thing that has neither body nor soul.”
 Our landlord argued, and we fed; and
 his harangue finished only with our dinner.
 We then resumed our journey to Bex.

I have not seen during my excursion
 many goitrous or idiotic persons. At Salenche
 I saw some few of the latter; and in dif-
 ferent other places I have observed the
 former. You know the opinions of medi-
 cal men are much divided upon the probable
 causes of these wens, and of the concomi-
 tant disorder of idiotism. These phænomena
 have by many been referred to snowy or
 calcareous waters, which are here drank
 by the inhabitants—by others to the marshy
 air, &c. but M. Saussure affirms, that in the
 higher parts of the mountains, where the
 snows and ice for the most part prevail;
 and in the vallies open to the plains, where
 the marshes are principally found; neither

wens nor idiocy are common. These are almost solely to be met with in the vallies elevated a little above the plain. In order to account for this phænomenon, M. Saussure supposes, that the warmth which the enclosed air receives in this situation, relaxes the fibres of infants; and produces these inflations of the neck, and that *inertia*, which is the strong characteristic of the Cretin. This he establishes, by remarking, that on the side of the valley, where the heat from direct and reflected rays is greatest, these disorders most abound; insomuch that it is now customary for those whose circumstances are not too contracted, to send their wives to lie-in, and their infants to be nursed upon the mountains; and this experiment has, in no instance, failed of preserving the health and faculties of the children.

L E T T E R LIII.

WE were now entered into the valley of the Rhône, and shortly arrived upon that plain, consecrated to fame by the cascade of the Pissevache. The body of water rushes between the divided projections of a rock, whose summits are rounded off, and overspread with a picturesque umbrage. Its waters dash with the force acquired by a fall of near three hundred feet against the rocky fragments below, and remount in a cloud of foam. In comparison of these stupendous phænomena of nature, how little are the atchievements of art !

St. Maurice, through which we now passed, is the last town of the Vallais ; and is famous for having been the Agaunum of the ancients, where the massacre of the Theban Legion happened. The Roman
bridge

bridge of one arch, built across the Rhône, is still in existence. Their excellencies of Berne, whose territory here commences, have a small garrison in the place; and some frivolous questions, of our names, country, designs, &c., put by a few invalids, notified our entrance upon this sovereign soil. We arrived in the evening at Bex, and finally dismissed our guides. Before I take my leave of them, let me commend their activity, fidelity, and gratitude. Men more ready to serve, and more disposed to be satisfied, I have never yet met with: their understandings are in general good, their information sound, and their manners pleasing and ingenuous. This is an eulogium due to the guides of Chamouni.

Bex is famous for the salines, or salt works, which are carried on in its neighbourhood. We visited these the following day, having obtained permission from the superintendant. Our char-a-bancs carried us to the foot of the mountain which con-

tains these salt springs, and a guide conducted us to the mouth of those caverns by which we were to enter the heart of the mountain. I must observe, that it is now one hundred and twenty years since these springs were discovered; and the Seigneurs of Berne, who are the proprietors, have spared no expence to derive from them every possible advantage. The great Haller had for some years the superintendance of these works, which are now under the direction of Mr. Wild. It was suggested to the republic, that there must be some bed of salt sunk deeply under the mountain; because, in proportion as they dug into the earth, the water ran more copious, and was more strongly impregnated with salt. An experiment was therefore made at an immense cost; and upon digging below the bed of the Rhône, they heard the sound of a spring, to which they seemed fast approaching. This animated their labours: they penetrated to the spring, and

to their infinite mortification found it perfectly *sweet*.

A labourer met us at the entrance of the mountain, and furnishing us with frocks and lamps, conducted us along a narrow passage bored through the solid rock, and lined with sulphureous matter. After viewing in our way the reservoir, we continued along this channel, which kept ascending, till we came to the centre of the mountain. Here a large wheel of thirty-six feet diameter was playing with the ease of a clock wheel, and the sky was visible above, the mountain being here pierced from the summit to the centre. We now descended from this eminence, retracing our former steps, till we came to another bore of the mountain which opened a passage to the right. This, our guide told us, penetrated one thousand feet, and we should, he added, find the workmen extending it still farther. We entered upon it, but had not gone many paces before we felt a great difference in the atmosphere,

mosphere. As we advanced, we found the air still less fit for respiration: our lamps went out frequently, and we felt a painful pressure upon the lungs. Yet here the poor labourers were employed in chiselling the hard rock, and hewing out a passage, in an air poisoned by sulphureous exhalations, and to us—unfamiliar with its vapours—totally suffocating. We were at this moment, as the guide informed us, four thousand feet deep in the mountain. These poor people have but eight batz, or about one shilling per day. Their day consists of eight hours; at the expiration of which, the set that goes off, is succeeded by another, without interruption; so that the works are never suffered to stand still. We hastened to emerge from this dismal dungeon; and were on our way, when a hollow sound rumbled through every cavity of the mountain, and was conveyed to our ears in thundering claps. We were thrown into alarm, and imagined that the sulphureous air had kindled from the lamp,
and

and occasioned the explosion; nor did we find ourselves much relieved by the intelligence of our guide, that it was *only* occasioned by some labourers below, who were blowing up parts of the rock with gunpowder.

L E T T E R LIV.

SUCH was our exterior when we left the hollow windings of the Salt Mountain, that we were obliged to perform half a dozen lustrations before we were restored to humanity. What will not curiosity atchieve? A more disagreeable expedition could not have been undertaken. A frock, thick-set with grease, hanging over our shoulders—our heads bent, to watch our footsteps over the rank smoke of a lamp—noxious exhalations hovering round the walls—and a contaminated air entering into our lungs.—Such were the circumstances attending our

descent into these abodes of misery and horror. Speaking in the language of a traveller, it is one of those objects which it is more pleasant to *have* seen, than to *see*.

Bex is a town of no great extent, pleasantly situated, in a soil that has enriched its inhabitants to a degree incommodious to the traveller. Their indifference to further gain is such, that they will rather suffer their cattle to continue unemployed, than let them out to strangers at a reasonable payment. The grand eatable at Bex is potatoes. These they grow of an enormous size, and a very admirable quality. They usually serve them up, dressed in various ways, in the same course. Some troops were entering this town, at the moment in which we were quitting it. The occasion was sufficiently whimsical. A dispute had arisen among the inhabitants, respecting the church pews. This quarrel had at length assumed a serious shape, and a holy war was expected. Their Excellencies of Berne had
been

been requested to march some troops into the town, in order to quell those religious feuds, and reduce this church militant to a peace establishment. I suspect that the spirit of discontent, which is gaining so rapidly among the provinces dependent on the government of Berne, has excited them to this measure of precaution ; and the struggle for church pews, has only afforded the pretext for putting it in execution.

We now passed by Aigle and Villeneuve to Vevai. This was a very delicious part of our journey. It was on this day that we regained our view of the Lake of Geneva, at the extremity of which Villeneuve stands. Between Bex and this last mentioned place, we saw the entrance of the Rhône into the lake. There is nothing peculiarly striking in this, beyond the consideration, that this river continues its course through the Lake till at Geneva—a distance of more than forty miles from the point of entrance—its waters are again collected into a stream, acquire a

new velocity; and move in a rapid current towards the sea.

We passed the Chateau de Chillon, as we drove to Vevai. It is a very beautiful ornament to this part of the Lake, and reminds one forcibly of antient fable. This Chateau is built upon a stupendous rock, running far into the Lake; on the other extremity of which are the heights of Milleray, immortalized by the pen of Rousseau. It was in this Chateau that the bailiffs of Vevai had their antient residence; and, previous to the introduction of artillery, this fort was considered as impregnable. The garrison has lately been augmented by the providence of the Bernois, who do not view, without strong symptoms of apprehension, the eclat which the French revolution has obtained in the different provinces dependent upon their authority. We passed the night at Vevai—a very lively little town upon the banks of the Lake, furnished with
very

very agreeable promenades—and the next morning arrived at Lausanne.

I have now brought my journal of this expedition to a conclusion. Nine days were spent in accomplishing this object; and such has been our industry, that we have in the course of this short period gone over a track of near two hundred miles. I retrace the journey with great satisfaction. The scenes with which it has been crowded, will never perhaps, in my experience, meet a parallel. Where shall I seek again the contiguous elements of heat and cold? Where shall I find the transparent pyramids of Boiffons, or the icy magazines of Montanvert? What climes will show me a parallel to the chrystal arches over the Arveron, or the magnificent varieties of the valley of Entremont? Where, in its darkest moments, shall the mind borrow more sombre colours, than from the caverns and perforated rocks of Bex, or the flinty deserts of St. Bernard? My soul is chilled when I consider the wretches who

toil in the one, or reside on the other. But Heaven has moulded us to every variety of situation; and, when the wishes of man are bounded by his wants, there are few situations which can exclude pleasure; when they are not, no condition can banish pain.

L E T T E R L V.

Lausanne, Aug. 26, 1791.

WHAT a wonderful country is this! He who has sojourned on the banks of the Lemman Lake, will tell you, that the scenery around presents an ever-fruitful, ever-varied picture to the eye. The wonders of the universe seem here to be combined in one magnificent groupe, and all the sublimities of nature collected into a focus. Each recovering day gives birth to some new beauty. The clouds are distributed into more fantastic forms. The mountains are
illuminated

illumined with a richer lustre, and the trees are embrowned with deeper and more vivid tints. But it is in the rocks of Millerai that enthusiasm delights to dwell—those rocks where the wild and disconsolate St. Preux uttered his accents of despair. Oft as my eye fixes upon these awful precipices, the lover of Heloise is present to my view. I see him frantic with the agonies of disappointment, meditating, amidst these frowning heights, the rash resolve, as he surveys the gulph below. His notes of anguish seem still to live in faint and languid echoes—
“ Les rochers sont escarpés, l'eau est profonde, et je suis au desespoir.”

I should tell you, perhaps, that these mountains face directly that part of the Lake upon which our villa is planted; and it is among the chief amusements of the place, to pass *en bateau* to the very mountains themselves. The passage is easily effected in three hours; and a romantic repast is made on the shelving declivities of Millerai. The

baths of Evian form the principal rendez-vous; and here, on the Sunday evenings, the song and the dance are celebrated. Numbers pass the Lake from Lausanne and its environs, to partake of those festivities in Savoy, which the rigid police of the country denies them at home.

It has been remarked by many travellers, that Switzerland would form a very noble school of painting; and it is a matter of astonishment to those who survey the very rich and exuberant scenery of this country, that it should not yet have excited the labours of the pencil, and that the canvas should not hitherto have glowed with its original beauties. The author of the "*Ta-bleau Pictoresque de la Suisse*" indulges in the warmest raptures upon contemplating the general state of the country—which he calls an abstract of the known world; and then, adverting to the manners and genius of the inhabitants, he breaks out into the most indignant strain of invective: "Et
" pour;

“ pour qui cette superbe et magnifique ga-
 “ lerie? pour qui cette etonnante et riche crea-
 “ tion? pour un peuple insensible, apatheque,
 “ et froid—pour un peuple qui ne sent rien,
 “ qui n’imagine rien, qui ne pleure jamais,
 “ qui rien n’affecte; pour un peuple inca-
 “ pable d’emotions vives, de passions pro-
 “ fondes; pour un peuple qui ne connoit
 “ jamais le delire, l’enthousiasm de la poesie,
 “ de la peinture; ni les transports, les de-
 “ lices, les douces fureurs, les accens frené-
 “ tiques et brûlans des sentiments pas-
 “ sionnés.”

Those who have studied more closely the
 manners of this people than I have been
 able to do, will better decide how far this
 delineation of character is accurate. A very
 different, and far more favourable picture of
 this nation, is drawn by the masterly pen of
 the Chevalier Mehegan, which I am dis-
 posed to believe does them no more than
 strict justice. “ La habite un peuple sim-
 “ ple, bienfaisant, brave, ennemi du faste,
 “ ami

“ami du travail, ne cherchant point d’*é-*
“*claves* et ne voulant point des maîtres.”

Society is unquestionably in many families upon a very civilized footing, and all the *agremens* of polished life are cultivated with success. The peasants preserve for the most part the sturdy traits of antient character. They live principally on vegetable diet; are frugal, industrious, and, generally speaking, inoffensive. Their habits of economy are not wholly exempt from the meaner foibles to which it is allied. Frugality too often degenerates among them into a sordid attachment to gain, and renders it difficult to dispute the truth of that characteristic proverb—“Point d’argent, point de Suisse.”

L E T T E R LVI.

Lausanne, Sept: 20, 1791.

THE harmony of this place must now suffer interruption. Political intrigues have been carried on, to introduce some changes into the government, and, as it is rumoured, to effect a revolution, upon French principles. Great rejoicings were made at Rolle, a town not far distant, upon the anniversary of the French Revolution. At this festival were found some of the most considerable people in the Pays de Vaud; and toasts were drank, which carried no small terror to the ruling Powers. Since this memorable day, a very high tone of language has been held by many, whose influence in the country is great; and in private parties and public assemblies, no scruple has been made, of reprobating aristocracy, and holding up to ridicule the government
of

of Berne, which they stile "Le gouvernement
" d'Ours."

There were not wanting among the females of the higher rank, those who espoused warmly the cause of France, and carried into public upon their head-dress the national colours. The air of "ça ira" was demanded upon every occasion when music was to be had; and this was danced to in their numerous assemblies, with a degree of enthusiasm which threatened serious consequences. The Genevese have for some time past prohibited this dance; and those who have seen the effects it produces when performed in the spirit and with the vivacity of the nation from which it is derived, will not consider the proscription of such an air as a measure of contemptible precaution.

At Lausanne the government slumbered, or seemed to slumber. The libraries were resorted to for political discussion. There the French gazettes were read and debated. To so great a licence had the spirit of the
people

people proceeded, that the transactions of France were not commented upon without some bold application to their own government; and projects of reform, nay even of revolution, were more than whispered. At length the alarm was given, and the energy of the ruling Powers was awakened. It is not, indeed, to be supposed, that they continued idle spectators of the game that was playing. It had, however, the appearance of neglect, nay even of timidity. This might be done with the design of suffering the plot to attain maturity, in order to meet the full mischief, and crush, with more success, the partizans. News was quickly circulated, that the Bernois were now marching three thousand men, and several pieces of artillery, towards Lausanne, where they shortly arrived, and were encamped before the town. Measures the most vigorous were adopted, both civil and military. Lausanne had all the appearance of a besieged town: Cannon were planted at the gates, with lighted matches,

matches, in a state of preparation. A species of inquisition was instituted; and no ceremony was used in quartering a sufficient number of soldiers in the houses of those who were suspected to have been concerned in the intended revolution. Some people of consideration were arrested; and, if report may be credited, their treatment was marked with the most rigid severity. The Chateau de Chillon is the Bastile of the country: to this prison have been consigned, those who were considered as principals in the plot; and informations are still paid for at the price of fifty crowns.

What this plot was, which has brought a camp to our gates, and an inquisition into our houses, I am not able to inform you. The government of Berne does not make manifest the details of its proceedings, and some people have affected to regard the whole as a bubble. This, however, must be said, that very strong symptoms of discontent were discoverable for some time.

previous

previous to the arrival of the troops; and the general turn of conversation demonstrated, that some movement might shortly be expected. It is I think sufficiently clear, that the lower ranks of people in this country never felt themselves interested in the projected revolution. The punishments have entirely fallen upon families of a certain rank; and the peasants are observed to continue their labours of husbandry, without occasioning or receiving molestation.

Indeed, the grievances alleged have never appeared to me capable of interesting the community at large: they are principally felt by persons of condition, and relate, for the most part, to civil and military rank. As a province dependent upon Berne, it enjoys not the full privileges of the superior country; and officers are imposed upon them, both in the civil and military departments, to the exclusion of those among the natives who aspire to such rank. This is what I have heard stated by one who had the reputation

putation of being a principal in the conspiracy, as the most formidable species of oppression. However invidious and unjust this may be—however it may wound the pride, and provoke the resentment, of the higher classes—it cannot be supposed that a rough and hardy peasantry, who are not oppressed by taxes, nor abridged in the enjoyment of the fruits of their labour, should take any interest in reforms, which sought the redress of such grievances. The influence of their lords, and the eclat of the French revolution, might seduce the abject and capricious; but the wiser, and by far the greater part, would continue, as they appear to have done, firmly attached to the government, under which they enjoy tranquillity and protection.

L E T T E R LVII.

Lausanne, Oct. 2, 1791.

THIS country is now in its full beauty : all the sloping parts towards the Lake are covered with vines, the grapes of which are advancing fast to maturity. The vines are remarkably low, and planted very thick. They are supported by sticks ; and such indeed is their exuberance, that they stand greatly in need of support.

As I have understood, the cultivation of the vineyards is done upon this principle. The farmer undertakes the whole of the labour and expence ; in recompence of which he receives half the nett profit made upon the produce. This secures the estates from pillage. The farmers are very active in protecting the vineyards, which lie sufficiently exposed to depredation. It is diffi-

cult to make an excursion, in any direction, without passing through many acres covered with vines; and the heat of the weather, added to the very seducing aspect of the fruit, renders it not a little difficult to abstain from acts of plunder. As the vintage is now approaching, more than ordinary diligence is used to guard this sacred property; and men, suitably armed, are on the watch day and night.

The heat here is very oppressive, except when the *Bise*, which is a north-east wind, blows. This is extremely sharp; and passing over the snowy mountains, comes charged with a very penetrating cold. Though we have now been a considerable time in this part of Switzerland, and are indeed looking forward to our departure, I have not had opportunity to make any excursion beyond the Glaciers and the Lake of Neuchatel. But indeed the whole of Switzerland has been so accurately delineated in the journals of Mr. Coxe, and so warmly painted by the

Marquis de Langle, that I could not flatter myself with being able to tread to advantage the same ground, without borrowing largely from the industry of the one, and the animation of the other.

Such is the severity now adopted by the government of Berne, that the French language is in many regiments forbidden to be spoken. Some gentlemen, lately returned from an excursion into the heart of the country, related to me, that upon entering an inn where the officers of a Swiss regiment were quartered, they requested as usual to be shewn the room where the company supped. They were scarcely entered, when the Commandant demanded of the landlady in a very angry tone, "Qui sont ces Messieurs là?" "Ce sont des Anglois," replied the matron. He looked stern, and with some degree of harshness rejoined, "il est défendu à mes officiers de parler François;" and they supped together without exchanging a word. Proscriptions are now

going on with great dispatch ; but all is conducted with so much secrecy, that it is difficult to arrive at a knowledge of particulars. Thus much however is certain, that society has very considerably suffered by these political machinations ; and many individuals of the first character have been put under arrest. This change of measures in the ruling powers has abridged very greatly the freedom, and even the convenience of strangers. The libraries are put under a new law : all the gazettes from France, deemed dangerous or offensive, are proscribed ; and a notice has been affixed to the walls, prohibiting the discussion of political questions—threatening the librarian with a severe penalty, if he neglected to see the order enforced. The uniformity of my present mode of life, and the strict military law under which we now are, will not allow me to transmit to you more interesting details—and the dulness of the place must be my apology for the dulness of the letter.

L E T T E R LVIII.

Lausanne, Oct. 16, 1791.

I TOLD you in my last, that the pleasures of residence in the Pays de Vaud had been very much abridged by the collision of political interests. It was my fortune to have fallen under the particular patronage of the obnoxious party, and the destruction of their consequence has thrown me very much upon myself for amusement. Societies are indeed not totally annihilated; but all the frank and open intercourse of life is at an end; the shadow yet stalks abroad, but all the delicious substance is extinct. If any designs of a revolutionary nature were ever seriously projected, it is difficult to say whether the weakness of the projectors or the wisdom of the governors appears to have been the greatest. Disguise is considered so

essential to plot, that nothing but respect for the pointed cannon of their Excellencies of Berne can prevail upon me to believe, that half a dozen families of indiscreet enthusiasm had really conceived the design of detaching the province they inhabit from its alliance to the mother country. The ruling powers have at all events stolen a march upon them ; and whether the necessity may have been real or imaginary, it is certain that the government has sustained no loss of influence by this interference.

The livery of nature is now changing rapidly in this delicious country, and the completion of the vintage has stript the long hills of their best ornaments. With the swallow I am now lingering in impatient anxiety for the signal of departure to a warmer and more cheery clime. The cabals of state, by arresting the stream of amusement, have driven me to the elements of a new language ; and I shall hope to mix with a new people, not indifferently prepared

prepared to enjoy their society. My mind is big with that expectation which books and reports have taught me to form of the country to which we tend. Endeared by the fame of its heroes and its poets, and exalted by the character of its local beauties, it now fills up the void which banished pleasures have left; and my mind embraces, in these its moments of solitude and seclusion, a thousand fairy visions.

Some deduction must doubtless be made from anticipation, and proportionable allowance must be admitted for circumstances of change and deterioration. Such would, however, destroy the pleasure of anticipating at all, which is then only exquisite, when it sees no limit; and as I have yet to encounter a few more blasts of the cutting Bise, before I approach the *reality*, I am yet anxious to preserve the *vision* entire.

Your amusement cannot have received any special addition by my late communications. The uniform progress of my days

opens no discovery in circumstance or reflection; and you have little to expect on the score of novelty, till the Alps are between us.

L E T T E R LIX.

Turin, Nov. 7.

I WAIT your congratulations on having passed the Alps. I feel as though we had performed no mean atchievement. Unluckily so many have been beforehand with me, and so many are likely to follow, that my travelling pride must suffer, I fear, on the reflection, a great abatement.

We lingered too long upon the northern frontier to find a ready passage over this mountainous barrier. It was not till the evening of the 28th ult. that we determined upon this enterprize. The *Bise*, which is a very savage kind of wind, had
blown

blown for some days, and carried off the last remains of autumn. Our friends had severally struck their tents, and had quitted our neighbourhood in succession. Solitude, a barren soil, and the blasts of winter, now prompted our final resolve, and at the close of the day we bid adieu to the environs of Lausanne, and, passing the night at Morges, arrived the next morning at our old quarters in Geneva. As friendship is said to divide the pains and double the pleasures of society, we agreed to unite with two agreeable companions, of whom we had some previous knowledge, and who were, as we found, loitering between resolution and apprehension in the hotel at Geneva. The remainder of my day in that city was passed in seeking out those from whom I had on former occasions received marks of hospitable attention. Mademoiselle A. had arrested me at Rolle in the interim of preparation for breakfast. I profited of an hour's conversation with her on the state of French politics.

politics. Her talents for drawing had enabled her to indulge her veneration for some of the leading characters at Paris, whose portraits, in some cases from recollection, in others from engraving, she had designed with much spirit. These she decanted upon as she severally exhibited them with enchanting volubility. "Voilà des gens," said she, "comme il y en a peu!" On La Fayette she was most liberal in her encomiums. "C'est un homme fait exprès pour la revolution." My time was limited. Our political dialogue was interrupted by mutual adieus and reciprocal professions, "d'une amitié la plus sincère."

Geneva was rendered unusually gay by a vast influx of company from the neighbourhood to attend the comedy. This is, to be agreeable to report, the last season of theatrical indulgence; and, by a decree of the Council, no dramatical exhibitions are hereafter to be tolerated within the jurisdiction
of

of the republic. Theatres are, according to Rousseau, only justifiable in great cities; and I am of opinion with the puritanical legislators of Geneva, that the permission of a theatrical corps, in a town regulated even by the strictest police, may yet serve as a passport for the introduction of those vices which the indolence and the dissipation of this profession are too well calculated to encourage.

But I have detained you too long at Geneva, impatient as you must no doubt be to push across the Alps. Bear then with this delay in the outset, and I promise you that my narrative shall now move with as little interruption as the inequalities of the way will allow.

L E T T E R L X.

R E P O R T S had reached us the night previous to our departure from Geneva, that heavy falls of snow had been observed on the route, and that dispatch was necessary, lest the pass should be rendered impracticable. We made therefore every preparation to enter upon Savoy at an early hour, but were after all compelled to put up for the night at a village called Frangy. This is about sixteen miles from Geneva. Here we had early experience of that inexpressible misery characteristic of the inns of Savoy. The rooms into which we were conducted were strewed with clods of grass and dirt, and the supper was made up of vile morsels steeped in garlic. Our next day's journey brought us to Chamberri. The air was clear, and the mountains began to be

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be distinctly visible. Aix les Bains, which lies between Frangy and Chamberri, arrested our attention for half an hour. This town is remarkable for the excellence of its hot springs. They are sulphureous, and reputed to possess very salubrious properties. The baths are very commodiously constructed. Excepting some emigrants who have sought asylum here, very few strangers were to be seen.

Chamberri, where we next lodged, is, as you know, the capital of the duchy of Savoy. Its situation is not among the least of its beauties, commanding noble and varied views of hills, plains, and vallies. I saw the town in a disadvantageous hour. It was a saint-day, and the rain fell hard. These were two circumstances equally unfavourable to the respect of a trading town, which is only rendered cheerful by the spirit and activity of commercial occupation. The shops were closely barricadoed, and no doors were seen open but those of the churches.

churches. Here I followed the multitude, and encountered a host of beggars, more ragged, importunate, and clamorous than any of the fraternity of mendicants I ever met with. I ought to remark, that, agreeably to custom, this should have been the first stage from Geneva; and the accommodations here are at least such as ought to silence complaint. Our third day brought us to Aigue-belle, in the course of which we passed through Montmelian, sufficiently known in the contiguous countries for the excellence of its wines. It is at Chamberri that the valley opens which conducts to the foot of Mount Cenis. Down this valley the river Aar pursues its course, and moves with considerable rapidity. In some points it is worked into foam, and breaks its way with all the violence of the most impetuous torrent. In the journey of this day the Alps began to open upon us, till on our arrival at Aigue-belle they showed themselves in all their majestic and tremendous forms.

Our fourth day brought us to St. Jean de Maurienne, where we found no contemptible quarters.

From St. Jean to St. André, for we were now roving amidst the residences of the saints, we toiled the fifth day. The valley, as we advanced, gradually narrowed, and the mountains as regularly augmented in number, height, and horrors. The torrent of the Aar we passed a variety of times, in the course of this day, upon wooden bridges, of what appeared to us the lightest construction. We hinted some apprehensions respecting our safety, but were assured that their strength was ill-judged of by their appearance. The road was as little calculated to inspire confidence. It coasted almost uniformly along the most hideous precipices, exciting at times lively emotions of terror, and exhibiting, through a frightful alternation of ascents and declivities, all the varieties of difficulty and danger.

L E T T E R L X I .

IT was not till the evening of the sixth day that our procession arrived at Lanneſbourg at the foot of Mount Cenis. Nothing but miſerable ſights of human infirmity had occurred in this latter part of the valley. From St. Jean de Maurienne to Mount Cenis I ſaw little beſides fallow countenances and emaciated forms. St. André appeared, indeed, the head-quarters of goitrous idiotiſm and wretchedneſs. Mountains on either ſide ſeemed to compreſs, within a moſt gloomy and inſalubrious ſort of dungeon, theſe woe-begone inhabitants, who called to my mind

the waſteful hoſt

Of pain and ſickneſs, ſqualid and deform'd.

You will readily conceive that great falls of ſnow could not much improve a track which

passed over the declivities of mountains. Sixteen miles performed between the hours of ten and four, will enable you to judge of our pace and patience. The diversity of shapes and magnitudes, which the vast cluster of Alps, among which we were now moving, presented, under a deep coating of snow, made a very curious appearance.

In a village through which we passed, some violent shouts excited our curiosity. We found they were occasioned by an event of great importance to the inhabitants,—the shooting of a bear, which had made frequent descents upon this wretched hamlet, and borne off considerable booty; till the loss of an infant, whom he was supposed to have stolen, enraged the peasants, who pursued this inhuman depredator into the savage wilds in which he resided, and, at the moment of our arrival, Bruin was dragging in triumph through the village.

The approach to Lannesbourg offered a curious spectacle. The valley through

which we had been journeying for some days, and which had gradually narrowed, now appeared to terminate; and the mountain over which we were to pass seemed to oppose, by the trackless snow which enveloped it, an insuperable barrier. We entered Lannesbourg before the day closed, and were instantly surrounded by a number of men, who demanded permission to pull our carriages to pieces by royal authority. I respect governments wherever I go, and would not wantonly pour contempt upon any of his Sardinian Majesty's subjects; but I think in my conscience, that an assemblage of more ill-looking wretches never acted under government authority. A commissioner soon showed himself at the head of these raggamuffins, and throwing out a *tariffe*, in length "a full cloth-yard or more," gave us our choice of travelling accommodations, with the prices settled by order of the police. Our negociation with him was expedited by the pressing desire of finding
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the comforts of a blazing fire, and a trout fished out of the Lake of Mount Cenis. A very conversible madamoiselle, the daughter of the landlord, attended on us at supper, and did credit to the vivacity and naïveté of the Savoyardes.

The hotel, which is newly set up, stands a very fair chance of succeeding; for, in addition to the bad reputation under which the other labours, of being the worst and most imposing inn in Christendom, I have no where seen a little syren better calculated for detaining travellers, who are not violently pressed to cross the mountain.

L E T T E R LXII.

IT was not by the aid of mules and porters, sedans and sledges, that the hero of Carthage made his *entrée* into Italy: and yet I much question whether the Carthaginian soldiers complained more emphatically of

cold, fatigue, and inconvenience, than we did. I am impatient to carry you over this mountain, or I could expatiate very largely upon the murmurs I uttered and heard in the ascent from Lannesbourg. The air was indeed impregnated with particles of intense cold, and made its way through all the armour with which we were provided. One hour brought us upon the plain, when, to recover from the effects of these severities, we were conducted to a shed, in which a fire recovered us to something like good humour. From this shed we were severally drawn in a sledge to the southern extremity of the plain, by mules who trotted with considerable swiftness through the snows. The post is situated a mid-distance on this route, and was carefully announced to us by the guides and muleteers. At the Grande Croix, in the extremity of the plain, were some objects upon which I could not but bestow a share of attention. To the right was the lake so celebrated for
the

the excellence of its trout ; to the left, the hôpital.

This hôpital was founded, like that of St. Bernard, for the relief and refreshment of those pilgrims whom devotion might induce to seek the shrines of Loretto, or solicit the benediction of Christ's vicar. At some distance stood the "Chapelle de transis"—a cœmety constructed for the burial of those who may chance to perish on these pious expeditions. Numerous hûts are also raised upon different parts of this mountain, the residence of shepherds during the summer, as very excellent pasture is found in the bosom of those rocks which inclose the upper level, and whose points rise to a very considerable height. In fact, when upon this plain, which covers the summit of the mountain, we seemed to be in a valley, enormous ridges of rock rising on either side, some of which appear to bear the snows of ages. It was from this point, the beginning of the "descente des Echelles,"

that we entered the sledge, in order to slide down in the whimsical fashion in usage here, when the sides of the mountain are incrust-
ed with snow. A hundred travellers have told you what this mode is, and by what expedients and under what fears it is effected. I shall not, however, be deterred from telling you what I found it. You are then to imagine me seated in a sledge. To this sledge are fastened two sticks pointed with iron, in the form of a shaft. The guide seated in the front, by the assistance of these shafts, and his feet, which are also eminently serviceable, hastens or retards the motion of the machine, conducts it along precipices with wonderful dexterity, and makes, as occasion requires, yet oftener to show his skill, the most sharp and difficult turns. In some parts we descended with vast rapidity ; and the zig-zag course which these ingenious conductors sometimes pursued, in order to pass each other on the way, was really diverting.

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This was a very pleasant as well as novel descent. The objects by which we glided composed an assemblage of wild and grotesque scenery—a torrent amongst these issuing from the brow of that plain which we had quitted, precipitated its stream in the form of a beautiful cascade. Ten minutes brought us to the miserable village of Ferriere, the regular descent to which is called an hour. The sledges were discharged here as no longer useful, and the remainder of the distance to Novaleze performed on foot. The whole of this descent is estimated two hours or leagues, for time and space stand for each other in these countries; and thus reckoning the commencement of the rise from Chamberri, the height which is ascended by a track of twenty-five leagues, is descended in two. In this calculation, the perpendicular height of the mountain may be reckoned at more than seven thousand English feet. Our journey, though fatiguing, abounded in objects of curiosity and interest.

The memory of the great hero who, two thousand years ago, fought his way through this valley, was frequently a prop to my declining patience. What were our toils, in comparison of those sustained by men who had to scale the towering rock under the pressure of arms, exposed to the furly tempest, with no resources but the habit of combating danger, and the hopes of future conquest!

While I was entering my sledge at the point of descent, I eyed the opening through which Hannibal, probably, pointed out to his exhausted followers the spoils that awaited them in the delightful plains of Lombardy: for all circumstances conspire to fix the passage of the Carthaginians into Italy across the Mont Cenis. The line of separation between Savoy and Piedmont is the little Doria, a stream which rises in the Lake of Mont Cenis, and afterwards uniting with the great Doria, the waters of both are borne to the Po, at a little distance from Turin. At Novaleze, our carriage dissected

at Lannelbourg was very dexterously and completely re-constructed,—a subject of just congratulation, when it is considered how much more difficult it is to restore than to destroy. The course of the little Doria conducted us to Suze, a town agreeably situated, and in high reputation among the inhabitants on the northern side of the Alps; who furnished us with no article of luxury or convenience, but what they pretended to import from the fruitful treasures of Suze. This town has the reputation of being founded by Pompey. A triumphal arch is among the monuments of antiquity which it still preserves, and which is by Gruter carried up to the time of Tiberius. Our equipage passed rapidly through this place, in order to reach the inhospitable village of St. Ambroise; but in this the convenience of the horses was much more consulted than that of their masters, the stages of our journey being regulated by the distribution of the posts.

L E T T E R LXIII.

THE road in passing from Rivoli, the last village on the route to Turin, gradually opens into a considerable width, and announces with much magnificence the approach to a great capital. Turin cannot be too handsomely spoken of as a town. Regularity and beauty are terms appropriate to its character. I was extremely diverted by the appearance of the inhabitants. Dress, air, countenance, and language were full of novelty. Etiquette here holds sovereign sway. I saw numbers, whose thread-bare suit could scarcely maintain its place, squeezing with the utmost formality a *chapeau bras*—a burnished sword vibrating by their side.

Turin wears all the marks of a vigilant police. Every quarter of the town is tranquil

quail in the night. I went the morning after my arrival to view the palace. His Sardinian majesty was there, and we could not be admitted till he should set off for his *maison de Chasse*. The firing of guns, and the beating of drums, shortly announced his majesty's intention of quitting the palace. All who were on the spot drew themselves up in order and formed an alley, through which his majesty and his suite passed. This obtained me a sight of the monarch; but the squeeze was so great, that I had little leisure to take cognizance of the royal features.

I am not in general very curious in examining the interior of palaces, except so far as they are reputed to enclose the works and monuments of art. I was however unexpectedly gratified in this instance, by the uncommon splendor and rich decorations of the apartments. The number of them was prodigious, and they formed a labyrinth almost as intricate as that of Crete. I
shall

shall only mention a few of those rarities which struck me most forcibly :—Victor Amadeus, an equestrian statue. This monarch himself, in bronze, is mounted upon a horse of marble, trampling upon the bodies of slaves in chains, with all the wild barbarity of a conqueror and a tyrant. One stands astonished at the corruption of that mind, which can find a feast in such base and unfeeling adulation. “ *Parcere subjectis,*” was the favourite maxim of Henry IV. of France ; and the arts are miserably degraded, when they are employed to celebrate the abettor, rather than the vanquisher of tyranny, and to immortalize him who imposes, rather than him who breaks the chains of servitude.—The four seasons, by Albani, were curious objects of speculation. There appeared to enter much ingenious composition into these works of the pencil, and you will readily perceive, that a fine imagination can alone embody those phantoms of the mind. I know not whether Albani has executed

these pieces as well as he ought ; but I cannot conceive how he could have executed them better. The portrait of Charles I. of England, and his children, is a fine *morceau*, from the animated pencil of Vandyke. But my attention was very highly engaged by a small groupe which passes for the *chef d'œuvre* of Gerard Dow.* The subject is a dropfical woman seated in a chair. The physician is examining the water. The maid servant is at the same time administering a spoonful of physic to the patient ; and casting her eye upon the afflicted daughter at her mother's knee. Every circumstance, the most minute, is expressed with an accuracy, and a finish, which surpasses conception. This piece is said to have cost the late king twenty thousand livres.

L E T T E R LXIV.

TRAVELLING, like age, is garrulous ; and merely to see, without relating, is but to have half seen. I have made my debut as an Italian connoisseur, and am now about to appear in my new character of an antiquary. My knowledge is about equal in the one and the other science ; but a man cannot travel south of the Alps, without either being, or becoming so much of both, as to take off that stupid stare with which a perfect novice regards the works of art.

From the palace of his Sardinian majesty we went to the university, situated in that very handsome street, the Strada di Po. The university is announced by a portico, bearing the inscription, “ Regium Athe-
“ næum,” and consists of an extensive range of buildings, comprehending various ob-
jects ;

jects ; among which the “ Museo del Re,” or “ the King’s Musæum,” was pointed out to us as an object of importance to travellers. This Musæum forms indeed a very extensive and valuable collection of antiques in every kind, statues, busts, and ancient fragments. Among a great variety of elegant works in bronze, were a delicious little figure of Venus in the whimsical attitude of cutting her toe-nails : this is executed with the most perfect accuracy and beauty. The famous Tripod, which contracts or increases its dimensions at pleasure. A foot of a horse of the natural size, of the most exquisite execution : this, together with the leg of a man, supposed to be its rider, were purchased by accident of a founder who had employed the other parts to make bells, and was about to convert these precious relics to the same use. There are also some thunders of Jupiter, which yet retain strong vestiges of the brilliant gold with which they once glittered : to these must be added,

vases of silver, and sepulchral lamps, in all the forms which ingenuity could supply.

The collection of Egyptian antiquities is also extremely curious and valuable: numerous penates, talismans, &c. are here deposited. The objects which were held up as of the greatest estimation, were, “a head of Isis, and the Isiac table.” The first is of bronze admirably executed, and covered with hieroglyphics. The second, or Isiac table, is considered as one of the most precious monuments of ancient times, which Italy preserves. It is of red copper, nearly four feet long, and something more than two in width. Isis, who is represented sitting, forms the principal figure in this table, which thence derives its name. She is supplied with two bulls horns as symbols of fecundity. It appears to have been, in its original state, adorned with silver plates, as some of these ornaments still remain; and it is like the head of Isis before named, and, indeed, any relic of Egyptian origin, covered

vered with hieroglyphics. This mysterious table has furnished a wide field of discussion and enquiry for the learned, to whom hieroglyphics yet continue an inexplicable language. The most rational opinion yet offered, respecting the design of this table, is, that the Egyptians, who came to settle in Italy, formed it, in order that the epocha of their worship, their ceremonies, habits of their priests, &c. might not pass into oblivion. This solves, however, no part of those mysterious symbols which crowd the table; for, after all the efforts of antiquarian research, or happy conjecture, the Egyptian continues, in respect to his hieroglyphics, yet master of the field.

The collection of medals appeared to be numerous and well arranged; the greater part of these, and of the valuable antiques in general, with which this museum abounds, were taken from the ruins of "Industria," a well-known colony of the Romans, whose site and vestiges were not

discovered till the year 1745. The attendant at this musæum was an Abbé, intelligent and polite, who declined any gratuity offered, as contrary to usage. The stranger is, however, permitted to indulge his liberality to the servants at the door, the objects of whose bows and forward civilities cannot easily be mistaken.

I thought to have drawn the curtain upon Turin in this letter, but the musæum has carried me beyond the bounds I had prescribed, and I have too much respect for the Italian opera to mention it in a postscript.

L E T T E R LXV.

THE Italian opera is the touchstone of fashion; and no man, who has any regard for his reputation, would venture to dislike what good breeding obliges him to approve. The serious Italian opera is, in
the

the judgment of professional men, better presented on the English than upon the Italian stage. This arises from the liberal encouragement given to all the fingers of reputation, and from the very expensive decorations which these exhibitions receive in a country whose resources and prodigality seem to keep equal pace with each other.

The Buffo, or Comic Opera, is that which a stranger will visit to most advantage in Italy, this being the species of composition in which modern singularities are held up to ridicule; while the serious opera resorts to some tale of ancient history, choosing, for the most part, that into which the greatest number of splendid characters can enter. I went, the evening after my arrival at Turin, to the Theatre di Carignano, and was agreeably entertained with a comic representation of *La Serva Inamorata*. My knowledge of Italian is as yet but very slender; nevertheless, without understanding any considerable portion of the dialogue,

I found an excellent scholium in the gesture, play of the muscles, and musical expression, with which the whole was accompanied. To judge from the only two specimens I have as yet had, the Italians have a very extraordinary talent at musical inflection upon subjects of humour; and can render, with the greatest effect, by artificial modulation, the easy familiarities of colloquial wit. On a foreign stage the same freedom is not felt, because it is with reason supposed, that what will be ill understood where humour is concerned, cannot be highly relished; and every attempt to methodize or accommodate, must in such cases destroy those features of nature which he who studies mankind would wish principally to find.

Italian dancing has been frequently commented upon with great severity: and indeed, the measure of censure has never yet reached the demerit of the performance. Such outrageous strides, jumps, and somersets,

merfets, I never before had witnessed, as were exhibited in the ballets annexed to the operas. The dance formed a direct contrast to the song, and produced in me as lively emotions of disgust, as it did in the audience of applause. A dance of savages round a cannibal banquet could not have been more wild and extravagant. I could not but feel astonished, that a people, who excel so decidedly in the arts of musical expression, should judge so corruptly on a subject which appears to turn upon principles so nearly analogous.

L E T T E R LXVI.

I HAVE spoken with sufficient emphasis of the general beauty of Turin, and I ought to add, that the details will not suffer by examination. They reckon 110 churches in this capital, of which many are of great architectural beauty.

The *place* or square which precedes the palace presents a magnificent appearance. Eight streets there concentre ; and continued arcades, or piazzas, favour the exposition of every kind of merchandize. The place San Carlo divides, at nearly its centre, the Strada Nuova, and adds considerably to the splendour of the city. The promenades are delicious. They consist in an esplanade between the town and the citadel, and also in a beautiful distribution of the ramparts. The streets are for the most part wide, clean, and regular ; and many of the houses are constructed upon a grand scale.

The Po, near the city, appears not yet to have recovered from the commotion into which the muse of Ovid has thrown it. Addison tells us, on the authority of some botanists, that larch-trees, and not poplars, are those which shed a gum, and are found on the banks of the Po. And Apollonius could not have been very accurate when he tells us, that the thunderbolt of Jupiter so
affected

affected the waters, as to render it fatal to a bird to fly across the stream. But this was a favourite image with the poets; and the lake of Avernus was not esteemed by Virgil sufficiently corrupt without this quality. There is a pleasure of no common magnitude in contemplating those realities which have been wrought by classic fancy into such splendid visions. It would afford a still higher pleasure, if it were possible to divest them completely of the veil which covers them; for after all that Hesiod, Apollodorus, and still more rationally Aristotle, and others, who have improved upon this system, have taught us, the fable of Phaeton, and the combustion he occasioned, is one among those amusing mysteries whose machinery is enchanting, whose moral is obvious, but whose precise meaning has perished with the records of the times.

The spirit of trade seems to be very active at Turin, if any judgment may be formed from the lively bustle of the streets. Ar-

ticles of English manufacture are vended in every part of the town, and a very considerable traffic is reported here to be carried on with Great Britain. How greatly is the state of empires changed since Virgil pronounced the Britons "*penitus toto divisos orbe?*" I am aware that their insular situation formed a part of that sentiment; but the very striking contrast which modern Britain presents to the more general construction of the expression, I am called upon continually to remark. Briareus-like, she now extends her hundred arms over the different districts of the continent, and maintains, by the vigour of her commerce, and the extent of her political influence, a connection with every nation of the globe.

L E T T E R LXVII.

Felissano, Nov. 11, 1791.

AT the end of two days journey, we have got into a miserable village, and though shivering with an aguish cold, contracted amidst the snow of Mount Cenis, I shall endeavour, by attention to my journal, to forget my maladies. Imperious circumstances, rather than choice, shortened my stay at Turin; and as I had foreseen that our departure might be precipitate, I had availed myself of every opportunity to gratify my curiosity upon objects of interest and information. Being either too little or too great to quit without notice the capital of Piedmont, in attempting to cross the bridge over the Po, we were suddenly commanded to halt, and take off a pair of horses, it being contrary to the established rules of the place to suffer one man to drive out

four horses. This was rather a trial of pride than of patience, for the remainder of the town was of no great length; and our horses being again put to, we proceeded in quiet pace along the banks of the Po.

It was morning, and all that remained of dying vegetation was illumined by a clear and temperate sunshine. Although the season of the year has greatly abridged the beauties of the scenery, objects were not wanting to inspire the landscape with interest. A charming distribution of country villas covered a wide and variegated tract. The Alps, at distance, presented their snowy summits in a vast and stupendous chain, while beside us rolled in peaceful motion the turbid waters of that stream, consecrated to classic fame. Imagination was not idle in these moments so favourable to fancy. All the fictions which had crowded my childish memory embodied themselves before me; and I seemed to be moving over enchanted ground, till I arrived at Villa Nuova.

Nuova. I must tell you, that I never yet entered any town at so late an hour. For upon asking the *padrone* of the inn the time of the day, he assured me it was least 3 and 20 o'clock.

On remarking to our host that this was a small village, he replied, with some degree of displeasure, *padrone!* This word *padrone* is a term of most comprehensive signification; insomuch that I, who am but an *inceptor* in the language, feel some difficulty in determining the intention of the party by whom it happens to be used. In the salutation of friends, I have observed *padrone* enquired on the one part, and the single term *padrone* returned on the other; and, in this case, it implies the "How do you do?" and the "Pretty well, thank you," of the Englishman. But the sense in which my host employed it was, as I have since understood, a very common and a very civil one; namely, "I beg your pardon." In order to impress me more strongly

strongly with the importance of the place, he added, that it contained a convent. I was not quite satisfied with this proof; but fearing that my Italian might not bear me out in the dispute, and dreading the consequences of an attack upon the church, I suffered myself to be beaten out of the field. It was in our plan of this day's journey to reach Aleffandria, but the inevitable slowness of our pace, from the extreme badness of the road, and the counsel of an old man, who was questioned upon the remaining distance, determined us to stop at Felissano for the night. Two beds of straw, with scanty coverlids, just leave space for a ricketty table, upon which my pen is now moving; and the chilling winds, which enter by the papered casement, are playing most wantonly about my shoulders.

If ever you should be tempted to cross the Mont Cenis, at a period when the snows are almost knee-deep, and one or both of your boots may happen to admit
water,

water, let me caution you not to exchange your carriage for your feet. A raging fever of last night, and a thousand aches and shiverings all this day, enable me to assure you that the pains attending on such indiscretion, are as severe as those which punish some of the most important follies of human eccentricity.

L E T T E R LXVIII.

Castel San Giovanni, Nov. 13, 1791.

OUR host at Felissano made up in attention, for the deficiencies of his miserable accommodations. Alessandria, through which we passed in our road to Tortona, detained us no longer than was necessary to procure a dinner, for which we paid at a rate which left no room for regret on the part of the landlord. The country from Alessandria is for the most part flat, and in
a state

a state of high cultivation to Tortona, where we arrived in the evening.

I am not in the habits of retailing the articles of provisions which I find on the way, but our yesterday's fare may serve as a specimen of what I am given to understand is considered as an excellent Italian supper. A dish of macaroni was our first service. This was followed by a saucer containing some scraped parmesan. A plate was then introduced with some morsels of pigs liver, and a second adorned with omelettes and garlick. Three small birds, and a handsome desert, closed this *petit souper*, which, however deficient in weight and essentials, may, in the language of the Latins, be at least allowed to have been "*numerus abfoluta fuis.*"

Horace has told us of some meals in his time, in which variety appears to have been not less consulted. Nasidienus's supper made certainly a better figure; and was on that account more deserving of recital: but I
think

think that, taken upon a small scale, the gusto of antient times is not badly preserved in the modern arts of Italian catering. As I have brought Horace upon the stage, in vindication of my bill of fare, I shall make him do me another service before I dismiss him. His visits to Mæcenæ were frequent, and their repasts convivial. Some animating topic had engaged him at one of these “*noctes cœnæque Deum* ;” and inattentive to the objects of sense, which were doubtless set before him in profusion, he imprudently swallowed some garlick. How he felt upon that occasion, his muse has amphatically told us. My feelings are so perfectly in unison with his, upon all that relates to this nauseous vegetable, that though I am not prepared to consider it as a sufficient punishment for the crime of parricide, yet I can never see it cordially digested without exclaiming,

O dura messorum Ilia !

L E T T E R L X I X .

Piacenza, Nov. 14, 1781.

A VERY diverting Signora, who attended upon us at Tortona, gave us the first specimen of the Italian face, such, at least, as I have been taught to expect it. It is not beauty, or rather it is not loveliness; but it possesses great symmetry, and there is much in it to excite admiration. I remarked to the Signora that the town must be dull, as I understood from her that it could boast no theatre. She replied, that at present there was indeed but one battalion of soldiers at Tortona, but that their usual compliment was three. One was gone off towards France, and another into Savoy. I found by this, that a red coat was not without its charms beyond the Alps; and that the Signoras of Italy were of an opinion,

nion, not peculiar to this country, that
“ where troops were quartered, there could
“ be no want of amusement.”

Our journey from Tortona to Castel San Giovanni, where we stopped last night, brought the Apennines before us: but the country is in general so flat, as to furnish little variety. I would not say, of any part of Italy, that it is uninteresting. It was the theatre of all that is great in history for many ages; and not a spot of it exists that has not been the seat of some celebrated event. The classic enthusiasm of Mr. Addison was able to discover some vestiges of its antient grandeur, even in the rudest parts of this country. “ There is,” says he, “ scarce any part of the nation that is not “ famous in history, nor so much as a “ mountain or river that has not been the “ scene of some extraordinary action.” I could however learn nothing of Castel San Giovanni from any of its inhabitants. The place seemed sunk in wretchedness and poverty ;

verty ; yet an old wall, mouldering into ruins, appeared to commemorate some lost importance. The strolling ecclesiastics, of whom I enquired respecting those ruins, could give me no information, though they appeared to have sufficient leisure for antiquarian studies. No less than eight churches and three convents were enumerated in consequence of my enquiries ; and notwithstanding the deplorable wretchedness which covered the inhabitants, it was easy to see that the honour in their estimation outweighed the burden.

Indeed, I could not but be strongly impressed with this infatuation, upon passing a few minutes in their cathedral. It was curious to observe the contrast that appeared between the worshippers and their shrines. While the one were covered with rags, the other were invested with costly ornaments. Columns of marble supported the altars, while the thread-bare cloke scarcely covered those who knelt and crawled around it. On
the

the one, precious odours were ascending in votive clouds; from the other, proceeded only the vile scent of garlick. Yet the countenance of the worshipper spoke a sentiment above content. He eyed, with something more than complacency, the range of costly statues which enkindled his devotion, and seemed to forget the depth of his misery in the fervor of his prayers. How strong is the grasp of superstition, when it has once fastened upon its victim! The comforts of life really seemed to these deluded people, a very mean price for the religious trumpery they received in exchange, and the privilege of worshipping at a golden altar: content to exist upon macaroni, and to stretch their bodies upon beds of straw, provided their saints and demi-gods may feed upon frankincense, and inhabit shrines of alabaster!

L E T T E R LXX.

Parma, Nov. 15, 1791.

I KNOW not how a town can be viewed to less advantage than during a fall of undecided rain. By undecided rain, I mean that distillation which scatters a dusky mist over all the works of art. Such was the state of the atmosphere upon my arrival and during my stay at Piacenza; and perhaps it is to this that I owe the impression of dullness which I have brought away with me from that town. It is not, however, without its ornaments.

The Piazza Publico (which is a square) partakes of the grand; it is difficult, however, to be satisfied with more than one of its sides. Two noble equestrian statues commemorate in bronze, at two angles of this square, the virtues of Alessandro I. and his

his son. I ought to have admired, as books instruct me, the painted cupola of the cathedral; but, alas! the height of the cupola, and the gloom of the cathedral, had ravished those beauties from my sight. I was obliged to content myself with gazing upon an object which had the advantage of a better light—I mean the dial; as this was the first I had observed described after the Italian method of keeping time, and presenting on one circumference the twenty-four hours of the day. I was very much pleased with a small painting of the Virgin and Child in a glass frame, and hung over one of the altars in the church of St. Francisco il Grande; it had so much in it of sweetness and nature, that I cannot but hazard a word in its praise, though I have not yet found it in that list which travellers are instructed to admire. A very elegant altar in the same church attracted my particular curiosity; it was designed with art, and finished with beauty. The richest

marble, and the purest alabaster, were here expended with equal symmetry and profusion. I was anxious to know what Saint or Martyr claimed this altar. If it were my lot to be canonized, I know not a shrine I should more earnestly covet. A little invocation, and some few inscriptions, soon led me to its lawful claimant, who was no less a personage than St. Anthony, the great apostle to the fishes. All the good things in the province of Milan seem consecrated to this powerful Saint, whose head-quarters are at Padua. He was spoken of in very high terms upon the tablets which bestrewed this altar, and represented as very dear to Jesus Christ, and a great favourite of the Holy Virgin.

The church of San Agostino is a rising ornament to the town of Piacenza, and promises to end in a building of great taste and beauty. The side aisles are fitted up in a very elegant stile, and the new front which it is now receiving, presents the outline

line of a noble façade. The Augustines, to whom this church belongs, are in possession of vast property. It is at their expence that this church is now receiving its finish. "The façade," said an old mendicant, "has already cost 14,000 scellini."—"What then," said I, "these gentlemen are rich?"—"Rich!" said he, "richissimi—sono i nostri principi."

As the distance from Piacenza to Parma was not considerable, we passed from thence in the afternoon, and entered Parma in the dusk of the evening. The country in the whole of this route was delectable; not a rood of ground was to be seen, but what possessed the highest degree of cultivation.

L E T T E R LXXI.

Parma, Nov. 16, 1791.

My speculations of to-day upon the curiosities of this place have been so extensive, that though I burn with impatience

tience to communicate, I scarcely know whether the late hour at which I attempt this sketch will allow me to complete my report. It was a grand day at the cathedral, so that I had the pleasure of hearing high mass performed. The church of San Giovanni Evangelista, which I next entered, was very highly ornamented, and the pencil of Correggio has pourtrayed upon its cupola some animated figures; that of St. John is eminently beautiful.

The academy afforded me a large field of amusement. A variety of miscellaneous paintings and designs is here preserved, and some curious fragments of antiquity; amongst which was a very noble head of Jupiter. But the principal ornament of this academy, and one of the greatest ornaments of Europe I might add, is the *chef d'œuvre* of Correggio preserved here with great care, and still in high preservation. The groupe is formed by the Virgin, who has the Infant in her lap. Mary Magda-
len

ten is to the left of her, having her head reclined. St. Jerome, an angel, and the Infant Baptist, enter into the composition, and a more exquisite production never issued from the school of painting. I did not think it possible for imagination to pourtray a countenance of such delicacy, grace, and sweetness. She seemed to be occupied in affection, veneration, and rapture. These passions were blended like the mellow colours of the immortal painter into the happiest unity. The bold figure of St. Jerome, the attitude, the solidity and fainted gravity of his countenance, composed a striking counter-part to these softer passions. The infant was vivacious and benign. The Magdalen pensive and dejected; melancholy veiled the full lustre of her countenance, and preserved the proprieties of her character. The angel was what an angel should—I had almost said, all that an angel can be. Such is this wonderful painting. If I might make so free

with the terms of art, I would say, that it has all that softness, finish, keeping, and vigour can contribute to animate the works of the pencil. Days and years might be spent in admiring it; and genius might exhaust the power of language in its praise. A copy is now taking of this inimitable groupe, which promises to catch some portion of its spirit. But, alas! such are the imperious limits of this art, that no transcript can be made of its excellencies; and the pencil of the artist can alone perpetuate his own fame.

The theatre which joins the academy is sufficiently known as a building of wood, particularly constructed for the conveyance of sound without echo or confusion; and reports of travellers are perfectly correct as to this fact: for upon experiment made in a whisper at one end, the words were distinctly heard at the other. The form of the theatre is light and elegant. It is now, however, falling into decay, and the sole
use

use to which it is at present applied, is the occasional exhibition of Naumachiaë, for which the arena is very conveniently adapted. I could descant upon a second production of Correggio's, to which I was introduced after quitting the academy, but I am fearful that my epithets would scarcely hold out through another description ; and, indeed, to speak the truth, it succeeded the other too rapidly to find a particle of admiration disengaged.

I have been relaxing this evening at the theatre, being previously acquainted that a tragedy of Shakespeare's would be performed, and wishing to know in what manner our immortal bard would be handled by these cognoscenti. The tragedy was nothing less than Amletto (Hamlet) ; and, alas ! my poor countryman has seldom fallen into worse hands, since Voltaire attempted to translate him. The jokes and the idle play of words which were the side-arms of this poet, were all that this caterer

for

for the Italian stage had relished or understood. These were lavished, and not without effect, upon the audience, who seemed to have taken the whole for a burlesque, and expressed their approbation of these flights of humour with tremendous peals of applause. It was only in some moment when Hamlet himself occupied the stage, that any thing like gravity appeared in the house. Then, indeed, a call of silence was raised and echoed from different parts, and attention was erect till Hamlet, who was dressed in black, and brandished a white handkerchief in his hand, had done ranting. So much for Italian tragedy.

It is painful to see such inattention to the convenience of travelling in countries of such wealth and fertility. A small deduction from the palace would clear the peasant's path. Almost all the rivers in these opulent duchies, are destitute of bridges, and some are not passed in ferry-boats without danger.

L E T T E R LXXII.

Bologna, Nov. 18, 1791.

UPON commencing our route to Modena, we entered upon the old Æmilian way. I amused myself, during this part of our journey, with reading a letter of Pliny to Trajan, in which he mentions the Cura Viæ Æmiliæ as an object of great advantage, and thanks the Emperor for having given the appointment to a friend of his. It was some addition to this train of pleasurable images to be informed, that on passing through Reggio, I was viewing a place which, besides its antient fame, was revered as the birth-place of Ariosto. Modena is a delicious town, and has every advantage of buildings and situation. Tassoni, in his poem of the *Secchia Rapita*, has given a
very

very animated and just description of this his native place :

“ Modana Siede in una gran pianura,” &c.

The cathedral is rather singular than handsome, and sufficiently sombre for all the purposes of occult devotion. One of those who stand in the place of Levites, and serve about the altar, offered to conduct me to some objects of curiosity. They consisted of a number of antient mausoleums, whose inscriptions were not difficult to decipher. My guide was however so intolerably stupid, that I got no information from him as to their history. They were all found in the town, he assured me; and when I asked him how long it was since their discovery, he talked to me of more centuries than I should chuse to repeat. All that I could draw from him was, that they were “ trovati nel piazza,” (found in the square,) “ trasportati qui,” (conveyed here,) “ & tutti di marmore,” (all of marble.) This

last he repeated with great energy. He next introduced me, having previously lighted two candles, into a chapel, which he called the Chapel of San Geminiano.

This saint, of whose history I cannot inform you, is in great estimation among the Modanese, as Petronius is at Bologna. Tassoni, in his poem before quoted, calls the former *Gemignani*, as he does the latter *Petronj*, from these respective saints :

“ Che tolfero a’ i Petronj, i Gemignani.

CANTO I.

This chapel was sufficiently curious. There were two very well executed portraits in it. I wished to know the artist, but the only answer I could get was “ San Geminiano,” and “ tutto di marmore !” My guide now led me to the back part of that monument, on which the portraits were hung, and pointing to a small door, resembling the entrance into a vault, he rehearsed a history respecting it, which I was far from thoroughly comprehending. He spoke of creeping and crawling

crawling upon his knees, and accompanied his words with gestures, which made me conclude that this was the opening into some subterraneous passage. He asked me, if I would enter it? I made no objection; on which he unlocked the door, and pointed to the inside. I was surprised on looking, to find that it was but a small area under the monument or vault, the roof of which was supported by six or seven marble pillars, at such intervals as to leave room for a person to crawl on his knees. Upon seeing me hold back, he explained the whole of the mystery, by telling me "*Chi vuol*" "*obtenere una grazia di Dio bisogna ser-*" "*pere qui.*" (He who would obtain a blessing from God, must creep through here.) And stooping down, I observed that this operation had actually worn a channel upon the marble. I asked him how long it had been the fashion to creep among these pillars? He told me, five hundred years. Whether his chronology was accurate or
not,

Not, I had no opportunity to ascertain. The man seemed not a little astonished at my retiring without making this religious tour. Unfortunately he detained me so long in his recital of miracles performed at this tomb, and in the exhibition of a most marvellous and wonder-working crucifix, that I lost the opportunity of seeing the *Secchia*, which is preserved among the archives of this cathedral.

It passes for a species of miracle, that the mere theft of a bucket should become the foundation of a war; and it does at first sight present a subject of surprise, that the blood of nations should be spilt for “un-
“infelice e vil secchia di legno.” It is however to be feared, that in reviewing the wars of Europe, too many cases will be found, in which so valid a pretext cannot be assigned for the effusion of human blood.

L E T T E R LXXIII.

Florence, Nov. 21.

BOLOGNA is a town, the remembrance of whose beauties will not readily be effaced from my mind; and yet I have seen so small a portion of them, and been compelled to take so rapid and cursory a glance, that I almost blush to attempt any thing like an enumeration of its curiosities.

The churches are usually in all places the first object of attention: and I had heard so much of the celebrity of St. Luke at Bologna, that I immediately requested to be conducted thither. The path to this church is a continual ascent; but pilgrims of all ages, and labouring under whatever infirmities, seemed to tread it without reluctance or fatigue. The church bears the name of the Madonna di San Luca, from
the

the famous portrait of the Virgin, painted by the hand of the Evangelist, and which it is the boast and glory of the Bolognese to possess. A portico of three miles conducts the pilgrim to this object of adoration. This portico has considerable beauty, and still more convenience, as it affords at once the means of shelter and of rest. It was raised by voluntary contribution; six hundred and forty-eight arcades compose the whole range; all of which were built at different periods by the zealous devotion of private persons, or different corporations, and they were constructed in reference to each other, so as now to compose an uniform piazza to the entrance of the church, adorned with frescoes, some of which have no small merit.

The church is an elegant building, and bears on its walls some tablets, commemorative of miracles performed by this marvellous picture. This inestimable treasure is provokingly covered with a case, ornamented

with jewels, and different offerings of devotion; so that I could only judge of St. Luke's pencil by its miraculous effects. A string of beads, which I purchased to escape the suspicion of heresy, entitled me to a little tract, written by the Abbé Calindri, from which I learned the very high value set upon this precious deposit, the solemnity with which it is venerated at Bologna, and the innumerable benefits which have been derived by this city from its residence among them. The Abbé, speaking of the annual ceremony of carrying this image in procession, says, "*Molte altre volte é stato, &c. i. e.* This ceremony has also been performed in cases of public emergency, as was the case in 1779, on account of repeated earthquakes. The consequence was, that though these shocks were so violent, and so frequent as to agitate the country for three years, the city of Bologna sustained no sensible mischiefs from this scourge, which, during its continu-

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"ance,

ance, committed such ravages in the circumjacent cities."

The Abbé, full of the authenticity and influence of this magical picture, has annexed to his abridged account of this history, the means by which it passed into the hands of those who founded the present church. As such a curiosity may not often come before you, I will endeavour, for your amusement, to put this portion of monkish Latin into a decent English dress*. "In

* Anno Domini millesimo centesimo sexagesimo, Die octava intrante Madis. Actum in Monte de Guardia sub heremático Domne Azoline & Beatrixie, presentibus Domno Rambertino de Guezis, Domnus Marcheximus Ottonellus, Judex; Domnus Angelettus de Urfis, et alii plures testes, Domnus G. Episcopus Bonon dedit et assignavit supradictis Azoline et Beatrixie unam capsulam de ligno, cum tabula, ubi picta est imago Beate Marie manu beati Luche Evangeliste, quam portavit de Constantinopoli, in civitate Bononie Theoclys Kennya hermitanationis Grecus ibi presens ad conservandam, tenendam, et custodiendam in heremitico de monte de Guarda pro se et earum successoribus, in dicto heremitico ad honorem Dei et dicte imaginis. Prenominati Dominus Episcopus et Theoclys heremita hoc instrumentum assignationis ut super legitur scribere rogaverunt. Ego Vitalis Biblicie Dei gratia dicti Domni Episcopi notarius interfui; et hanc cartam instrumenti consignationis rogatus scripsi et sigillavi cum sigillo dicti Domni Episcopi indictione octava.

“ the year of our Lord 1160, and the 8th
“ day of May, in the Monte di Guardia, at
“ the hermitage of the ladies Azolina and
“ Beatrice, and in the presence of Signior
“ Rambertino de Guezi, Signior Marche-
“ sino Ottonello, Judge, Signior Angioletto
“ del Orife, and many other witnesses,
“ Gerard, Bishop of Bologna, gave and
“ assigned to the aforesaid Azolina and
“ Beatrice, and their successors, a box, con-
“ taining a tablet, upon which is an image
“ of the blessed Virgin, painted by the hand
“ of St. Luke the Evangelist, and brought
“ by Theocles, a Greek hermit, then and
“ there present, from Constantinople, to
“ have, to hold, and to keep in the hermit-
“ age of Monte Della Guardia, to the ho-
“ nour of God, and of the said image.
“ The afore-named bishop of Theocles,
“ the hermit, have called upon me to make
“ out the foregoing instrument. I there-
“ fore, Vitale di Beliesfa, by the grace of
“ God notary of the said bishop, have
“ written in their presence, and at their in-
“ stance,

“ stance, this instrument of conveyance,
“ and have sealed the same with the seal
“ of the said bishop, in the 8th indic-
“ tion.”

I must allow you to take a moment's refreshment after so tedious a journey through the scrolls of superstition. And as the whole resembles so strongly the structure of a fable, I think you will not object to its usual appendage—a moral! I am free to confess, that I could neither view, nor can reflect upon the whole, without concluding, that when religion is addressed to the senses rather than the understanding, there is nothing too ridiculous to become the object of adoration; and, for my own part, I can discern in the rationality of this species of devotion no difference between the tomb of Mahomet and the cross of Calvary—the image of Diana that fell down from heaven, and the portrait of the Virgin painted by Saint Luke.

L E T T E R LXXIV.

AMONG the advantages I derived from my visit to St. Luke, were the extensive, varied, and delicious views which I obtained of Bologna and the environs, from different points of the arcades. Numerous villages are scattered over the circumjacent country, which is adorned with the richest cultivation. The next object of attention which I found in my excursion, was the grand and beautiful church of St. Paul. It is not easy to imagine a more impressive piece of sculpture than that which stands before the grand altar, and represents the decollation of St. Paul. The hand of the executioner is raised to strike, and the neck of the calm and intrepid apostle is bared to receive, the blow. This group is disposed with such just attention to light and eleva-

tion, that no part of the effect produced by the energy of the artist is lost.

The academy (L'Instituto) being only viewed to advantage during a clear light, was the next scene to which my intelligent and managing lacquey conducted me. This is a collection which, as it might not be cursorily viewed, so it ought not to be lightly criticised. Among the more valuable treasures of this museum were a large variety of designs and sketches, by different masters of the Bologna school. I know scarcely any pleasure equal to that of tracing the growth of a noble thought from the rude outline to the last perfection. In viewing the random sketches of the pencil, one is enabled to separate genius from art, and to discriminate between imagination and mechanism. I wished to have dwelt longer upon the contemplation of these draughts, but I was obliged to obey the summons which called me to the Hall of Antiques, where my eye was lost in beholding statues, and limbs of statues,

tues, pigmean heads, colossal feet, Roman wells, idols, tablets, and tomb-stones. I had scarcely time to wonder, before I was hurried into a library, said to contain twelve thousand volumes, besides MSS. With the same rapidity, I lastly visited various cabinets of minerals, petrefactions, and philosophical instruments, halls of wax-work, chambers of fortification, and naval tactics.

Of palaces I saw but one, viz. the Sampieri, where the Labours of Hercules, by the Caraccis, the Crucifix in ivory, by John of Bologna, and other productions, attracted their portion of admiration ; but my attention was chiefly fixed upon three paintings. The first of these was the very affecting scene of Abraham dismissing Hagar, by Guercino. All the emotions which their respective situations could inspire, have been attended to by the painter. Sternness on the one hand, and distress on the other, were never expressed in a manner which could speak more powerfully to the feelings.

ings. There are dusky tints in the colourings of this master which assort well with the graver subjects. The second was a portrait of Christ, and the Pharisee who brought the tribute-money. The countenances could not be inspired with juster expression; plausibility and artifice reigned in the one, caution and penetration prevailed in the other. The painter appeared to have nicely studied the shades of sentiment and character, and to have well distinguished between subtilty and sagacity, between the speciousness of art and the sobriety of truth. The last is a painting, whose fame is not confined to the spot which contains it. I mean the celebrated production of Guido, in which St. Paul is represented rebuking St. Peter.* Any other performance would have acted in vain upon my nerves, whose vibrations began to fail, exhausted by repeated impressions of the sublime; but this was irresistible. The first glance quickened my senses, and all my powers of admiration suffered a resurrection.

I declare

I declare to you, that in contemplating this interesting work, I seemed to enjoy an interview with the very personages whose portraits were expressed on the canvass. And what an interview! With what characters! and on what occasion! Two apostles whose equals for piety and christian heroism are yet to be sought—men who, from the similarity of their views, their motives, and their labours, must have entertained for each other the highest reciprocal affection and esteem—are here found in a situation the most critical and interesting. “I rebuked him to his face, said St. Paul, for he was to be blamed.” I thought I saw in the countenance of the first, an inflexible attachment to virtue and to truth, which silenced the pleadings of private feeling; and obliged him to reprove the errors of a man, unequalled perhaps in the christian church, excepting by himself. In the latter I marked manly sorrow and sober penitence. While the former stood with his hand raised, his finger pointed, and his attitude bold, the latter

latter sat with his head reclined, resting upon his hand, and his eyes turned with confusion from the countenance of the rebuking apostle. So much life, vigour, and interest, such an union of sentiment and pathos, I have never yet seen in the productions of the pencil: and I am much deceived if the impression which this excited, will ever be surpassed by any of the master-pieces of art which may yet lie before me. However that be, I cannot but felicitate myself upon having acquired that fund of noble images which the recollection of this painting supplies: and if I could with the pilgrims persuade myself that the sight of a picture would quiet my conscience, and settle my faith, I should make no scruple of turning my back upon the Madonna di San Luca, and seeking my absolution at the Palazzo Sampieri.

L E T T E R LXXV.

BOLOGNA is reputed to contain as many paintings as Rome itself, and some are of opinion, even more. The churches of Giovanni in Monte, that of the Dominicans, St. Agnes, Corpus Domini, and Petronius, were the chief of those which, in addition to the Cathedral and that of St. Luke, I had leisure or even disposition to visit.

The first of these could not be neglected. Respect for the Cecilia of Raphael carried me there, and I was repaid by the sight of a countenance full of serenity and beauty. The church of the Dominicans contains the Massacre of the Innocents, by Guido. This is held to be one of his best productions, but it is a subject which excites horror. The church is one of the handsomest buildings in its kind that I have ever seen. A very elegant

gant tomb of pure marble here pretends to preserve the relics of that Saint to whom the church is consecrated. The guide unlocked a small door, in order that I might apply my hand to the place where the body lay, and obtain, as I supposed, full demonstration of the fact. In compliance with his wishes, I made the experiment, but not feeling all that anxiety to be convinced, which he showed to convince me, I did not obtain sufficient evidence to remove my infidelity. I ought to observe that the Dominicans have lately possessed themselves of a very beautiful painting, representing the death of the Virgin. It is a production full of sweetness and delicate expression, and may be regarded as a valuable acquisition to the treasures of this monastery. The martyrdom of St. Agnes has given sufficient celebrity to the church of that name : and the powers of Dominichino are in this bold design very ably and successfully exerted. St. Petronius had nothing to shew me but

the meridian line drawn by Cassini, and the figure of that son of Mars whose hand was arrested in an attempt to wound the Virgin. The history is given at length by Moore.

The opera was very brilliantly supported by some singers, who will, I presume, in due time, follow the fortunes of their brother Sepranos, in England. Crescentini is the favourite, and the Dilettanti have great expectations from his promising talents. Bologna is indeed the school of Italian music: and as the air is soft and temperate, the voice must have an advantage the loss of which is much felt in England.

I regret that the shortness of my stay should have deprived me of the power of communicating more extensive information upon the interesting curiosities of this delightful town. Its general aspect is strongly prepossessing, and its details are subjects of study. We left it yesterday morning, and began to ascend the Appennines. These mountains are diversified by a rich and laboured

boured cultivation; and the two days passed between Bologna and Florence were enlivened by scenes of magnificence and beauty. The lambent and sulphureous flames of Pietra Mala, rising near the village of that name, and constantly burning, lighted us as we approached Cavigliaro, the boundary of our first day's journey: and early in the morning of the second, we descended amid the rays of the rising sun upon the turrets, palaces, bridges, gardens, and all the majestic scenery of this celebrated capital.

L E T T E R LXXVI.

Florence, Nov. 25, 1791.

THERE is nothing that requires more art than a just selection of local curiosities. It is difficult to discern the fairest where all are fair, and to fix upon the most useful

where none are without their use. Florence abounds so greatly in objects of interest to travellers, is so rich in natural scenery, monuments of architecture, and cabinets of art, that the mind is rather distracted than directed, by those catalogues which undertake to do the duty of guides. Whether I have yet visited one tenth part of its nominal, or digested one hundredth part of its real beauties, I am not anxious to know ; my time has been wholly employed in seeing, and much of what I saw has filled me with wonder. The gallery,—the great monument of Tuscan liberality, and the first resort of strangers,—has furnished me with a large fund of study and amusement. The princely bounty of the Grand Duke, who has enlarged the salary of the guides, to throw open the gates of this invaluable museum, is a subject which calls for the traveller's eulogium. All who have crossed the Appennines, have indulged in the praise of this gallery ; and, though the rarities of its cabinets have been

so often and so variously served up, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of reporting to you in what manner I was affected by them. The Tribune, which is usually the *last* displayed, was that into which I accidentally entered *first*. I knew not the name of the cabinet, and had followed some strangers. “ This (said our conductor) is the Tribune, “ and here,” pointing to a statue that stood before us—“ is the Venus de Medicis.” Thus taken by surprise, I remained for some time in silent contemplation of this “ statue “ which enchants the world,” and which is considered as the perfection of sculptural art. Carrying my speculations back to the first rudiments of this wonderful production, I pictured to myself, with the Abbé Du Palli, the birth of this design in the mind of the sculptor, and the enthusiasm which fired him when he first viewed the mass. Kindling as I gazed, I traced the progress of the chisel through all the stages of its formation. I admired the genius which actuated, the art

which guided, and the delicacy which managed the sculptor's hand. Such circumstances must combine to give perfection, and perfection is the only attribute which can characterize this statue. The Arrotino or Whetter, who stands to the left of the Venus, is a subject both of admiration and perplexity. Position of body, cast of countenance, and circumstance of occupation, denote some mystery which they do not develop. He is resting on one knee, and whetting a knife or cutting instrument. His head is elevated inclining to the left, as though he were listening to something said. It is curious to observe what ingenious conjectures have been indulged upon the history of this Arrotino : he is listening to Cataline's conspiracy, he overhears the plot of Brutus's sons to restore the Tarquins : it is Cincinnatus ; it is Manlius Capitolinus ; and lastly, as though there were not already sufficient hypotheses to obscure the fact, the Abbè Palli has found out that it is the Scythian who assisted

at the duet between Apollo and Marfyas, and who afterwards flayed the latter. Now, that he is listening, cannot be disputed: and that he may be listening to the Catalinarian or the Tarquinian faction, are conjectures equally probable. And whether or not he represents the Scythian who was to slay Marfyas, it must be owned his heart seems ripe for a murderous deed. The history of this character is, in short, among those records which have slipped through the fingers of time, and whose place can only be supplied by fancy and conjecture.

L E T T E R LXXVII.

Florence.

As I have ventured so far into the field of description, it would be treason to the remaining statues not to allow them some share of encomium. The Wrestlers, so oft

and so deservedly admired, is a most beautiful and energetic production of the chisel; the mind of the artist must have been filled with the justest conceptions of human proportions and anatomical accuracy. My ignorance of antient sculpture had led me to form false and vulgar expectations of this groupe. The figures are of a moderate size and a perfect form; and exhibit an happy union of beauty and strength, of grace and vigour, of muscular force and personal comeliness. The inter-twining of the limbs is most artfully rendered, and evinces at once the power of the superior, and the disadvantage of the fallen combatant: while the countenances respectively express, by emotions of confidence and agony, the triumph of the victor and the despair of the vanquished. The dancing faun is certainly the most facetious and mirthful character ever brought out of marble. This grotesque figure is presented with one leg elevated, in the attitude of dancing. His head is inclined with
much

much natural expreffion, and in his countenance is painted a lively image of luxurious joy. Every lineament discovers the abfence of folitude and the annihilation of care. It is indeed a charming ftatue, full of antient thought, and in perfect unifon with the feftive imagery of the Grecian mufe. I might now conduct you, as I was conducted myfelf, through a feries of cabinets feverally furnifhed with diftinctly arranged curiofities. Among others were thofe that contained collections of precious ftones and minerals wrought into a thoufand varieties of form. Here were columns, vafes, and urns of agate, rock-cryftal, lapis lazuli ; and, in fhort, a large profufion of antient and modern valuables, diftributed and afforted with great tafte. The cabinet of portraits was not among the leaft interefting of thefe fecondary departments. Thefe portraits are of different painters, painted by themfelves. Madame Le Brun and Angelica Kauffman are not among the leaft attrafting. The

very noble urn di Medicis, on which is represented, in relievo, the sacrifice of Iphigenia, forms a grand central ornament to one of these saloons. The Cabinet of the Hermaphrodite, and the Hall of Niobe, containing this descendant of Jupiter and her fourteen children, are treasures of inestimable value. Amongst a variety of urns, sepulchral fragments, and different *morceaus* of antiquity, are the known and celebrated busts of Alexander the Great, and Brutus, the last of which may well deserve a place amongst the productions of the Grecian school. These busts have also set the learned afloat upon the ocean of conjecture. The first of these is the bust of a colossal figure, and bears in the countenance a strong expression of agony. What circumstance this alludes to in the history of Alexander is the question at issue. "He sighs for new worlds," says Mr. Addison. "He is disturbed, *beyond a doubt*, say others, with remorse for the murder of Clitus." There is certainly an expression
of

of pain in the countenance more deeply coloured than the fretful emotion of pining discontent could inspire ; and such as might be expected from the man, who had rashness enough to kill, and sensibility sufficient to repent. The bust of Brutus has also furnished work for the critics. The bust is excellent, but *unfinished*. All the mystery is, why should Michael Angelo have left it in this state ? Cardinal Bembo has assigned a reason which will scarcely please beyond the pale of a court.

Dum Bruti effigiem sculptor de marmore ducit,
In mentem sceleris venit, et abstinuit.

But Michael Angelo has left many unfinished works. All his figures upon the tombs in the chapel of St. Lorenzo, are uncouthly and imperfectly sculptured. Perhaps this great man, enamoured with the rougher strokes of his chisel, and pleased with the expression of his outline, would rather leave the bust unfinished, than efface the bolder parts by an addition of the last polish.

L E T T E R LXXVIII.

Florence,

THIS city appears constructed, in all its parts, to fill the eye of the traveller with pleasure. The streets, which are paved with even flag-stones, chiseled as occasion requires, for safety—are generally clean; and where they open upon the Arno, are illumined by wide and varied views, extending on either side of this noble stream. The entrance from Bologna is not improperly called a descent upon the town: for at the distance of some leagues the whole appears extended below the brow of the Appennines; and the traveller seems to be plunging from the lofty precipice into the bosom of those vistas and parterres, which intersect and adorn the vale below. A triumphal

umphal arch receives him at the foot of this descent, and announces his entrance into the Tuscan capital. The palace Pitti, residence of the Grand Duke, is sombrous in its aspect, but has an air of Gothic majesty. The interior is noble, and adorned with all that art, riches, and good taste can contribute to dignify the palatial residence. Here Pietro de Cortona has lavished the finest touches of his pencil upon the ceilings ; and among the pendants is preserved the Madonna of Raphael, to which the connoisseurs assign the highest rank. It is but justice to the patron of this palace to say, that it is exhibited with the same liberality as the gallery : and that strangers are conducted through all its chambers with an attention and respect, which in other places is considered as involving the expectancy of an exorbitant fee. The palace Ricardi is a structure of noble architecture, raised, for the most part, upon the designs of Michael Angelo. It is impossible not to be delighted with the very elegant and masterly pieces
of

of Luca Giordano which cover the spacious roof of the grand saloon. Of the four Evangelists painted by Guercino, each had its proper merits ; but the portrait of St. John was a faithful transcript of the Evangelist's pen. It was a countenance animated with as much fire and intelligence as can consist with sweetness and sensibility. Of other palaces I can only speak from a view of their exterior, and the reports of others. Their inhabitants are reputed to hold an high rank in polite accomplishments ; and, those who have leisure to cultivate their society by a longer residence, bear testimony to their domestic hospitality. Amusements of every description are in this city at their zenith. Their opera has indeed its seasons, and the tide of gaiety its flux and reflux ; but from what I have seen—and still more from what I have heard—no city has a fairer ground of pretension to detain those travellers, whom *ennui* and *hypochondria* have driven to seek the cure of their melancholy from the hands of pleasure.

L E T T E R LXXIX.

Florence.

THE cathedral of Florence is a very large and ponderous edifice, constructed of black and white marble, and therefore presenting a very shadowy aspect. The statues of the twelve Apostles, and the noble basso relievos which surround the altar, hardly compensate the gloom which overhangs the general mass. The brass gates which adorn the baptistery, an octagonal building detached from, but belonging to this cathedral, were by Michael Angelo deemed worthy of opening and shutting the entrance to Heaven. Next in order is the church of San Lorenzo. Here, in the chapel of the princes, are the two celebrated tombs of Michael Angelo. They are, like his bust

of Brutus, imperfectly sculptured ; and presented to me little beyond the rude outline. Two figures of bold design adorn each of these monuments—the first of which represent Day and Night—the second Crepusculum and Aurora. The chapel di Medicis in this church is deservedly esteemed amongst the ornaments of Florence. It contains six tombs constructed upon the designs of Michael Angelo. The form of the chapel is octagonal ; and the monuments are, in point of design and execution, striking and magnificent. Oriental granite of the most beautiful vein, lapis lazuli, coral, and, in short, every species of stone and mineral is here disposed and arranged by the hand of a master. And were the chapel completed in a style suited to the original plan, the world would not be able to shew so perfect a model of taste and magnificence. The church of Santa Annuntiata is adorned with some handsome altars of marble, and paintings of no mean execution. The *bas reliefs* in

bronze by Jean de Bologne, compose rather an interesting than splendid ornament to the Chapelle de La Vierge, in which an image of high character is deposited. The flagellation of Christ is, among these brazen tablets—an extraordinary effort of genius, replete with vigour and sensibility. Among the contiguous cloisters are some admirable frescoes. The wasteful hand of time, and exposure to the damps and dews have brought into decay a beautiful Madonna of Andrea del Sarto, whose bust and epitaph are affixed against the walls of this cloister. The church of the Dominicans is of inferior reputation to the convent. This contains a grand elaboratory for balsams, simples, &c. and is esteemed to produce some of the best essences and perfumes which ever shed their fragrance around the persons of beau or belle.

The church of San Spirito, presents a bold design of solid but simple architecture. It is as yet so little advanced, that the paintings it contains are perfectly eclipsed. It promises,

mises, however, to exhibit in its finished state that species of grave and decent edifice, which corresponds with the rational idea of a Christian Temple. My register of the churches shall close with that of the Santa Croce. It had for me only two objects—the first of which was the monument of Michael Angelo—a monument worthy of the subject. Three of his scholars united to form this memorial of their illustrious preceptor—equally skilled in the rival arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture. The tomb of the great Galileo was the second. A simple bust and tablet of marble record his memory. Peace to his ashes! May no sacrilegious hand destroy the pile on which his name is inscribed! may his memory for ever flourish! and may it appear from the concurrent plaudits of all succeeding ages, how perishable are the decrees of superstition and error, how immortal the discoveries of reason and truth!

L E T T E R LXXX

Foligno, Dec. 1.

IT was not without great reluctance that I left Florence, after so short a stay. An offer of introduction to some of the principal inhabitants, rendered this abrupt departure still less palatable; but change and reverse are the lot of man, and the chances of travel, like those of life, are not all in favour of the adventurer. It was by a tardy movement of more than two days, that we reached the antient and venerable town of Peruggia.

The journey to Rome, by this route, is less frequently taken, than that of Sienna, as it is a track extremely circuitous; but those who study the wear and tear of horses and carriages, prefer this route, as more than compensating for its length, by

the superiority of its roads. Among the curiosities of this place, are to be seen many of the productions of Pietro Perugino, the master of Raphael, whose best and greatest works are here preserved. At the church of San Francesco, is one representing the Resurrection, on which I fixed with a great degree of admiration. The outline was faithfully sketched ; and there appeared a great degree of accuracy and chasteness in the drawing, and disposition of the colours. In what I had ever before seen of this master, there was so great a dryness and formality, that it was difficult to trace, without a deeper knowledge of the art than I can pretend to, any thing like the touches of an able and animated pencil. But from this and other specimens at Peruggia, it appears, that Raphael may have stood considerably indebted to the lessons of his preceptor. Superadding to his own genius the principles of Pietro, he has shewn the sublime effects which result from the union—too seldom existing—
of

of strong talents and attentive study. This church was rich in excellent paintings. From viewing some designs, more remarkable for their quaintness and antiquity, than their merit, I passed to the contemplation of an assumption of the Virgin, which passes with me for the best Raphael I have yet seen. The Virgin is represented in Heaven, and Jesus Christ placing the crown upon her head. The Apostles below are collected about her tomb, and gazing upwards with countenances full of attention and rapture. There was in this painting a sort of expression, which made its way more successfully to my admiration, than the Cecilia at Bologna, or the Madonna at the Palace Pitti. I had formed very erroneous conceptions of the pleasure I was to derive from the productions of Raphael—expecting to know them at first sight, and to worship them almost by instinct. Painting has however its mysteries, I find—and it requires some study and knowledge of its principles, to be able

to admire what is most excellent. Like the sister arts of poetry and music, it seems to hide its excellencies from those who are ignorant of its laws. A good painting seems therefore to stand very much in the predicament of a good poem, and a well wrought concerto. Some simple delineation shall fascinate in the *first*, beyond a regular and studied production ; while in the *last*, an artless tale and a popular air shall please more, than the stately muse of Milton, and the learned melodies of Pergolesi.

At a palace belonging to the noble family of Della Penna, I was gratified with the sight of some of the best and most finished pieces, from the hand of Salvator Rosa. Numerous productions of this extraordinary master were shewn me, in which all the wild and grotesque fancies which genius could create, were brought upon the canvas. To these were added four landscapes in his best stile, two of which present nature in less uncouth forms, and are

in all respects deserving of the highest eulogium.

I was completely occupied, during the time we passed in this town, with the various and valuable specimens of art which I had opportunity to visit. The town is sufficiently gloomy in its aspect—the marks of antiquity, desertion, and decay, are strongly visible in all its extent: and it is among the very few cities in Italy which are struck out of the list of the travellers route. It is however certain, that though little visited, it wants not its importance in the scale of art. Its churches and its palaces have indeed little to boast of splendor or ornament: the intelligent traveller will, nevertheless, be repaid, for entering apartments seldom inhabited, and churches little frequented, by designs and studies appropriate to this place, and of a class which is in vain sought for in cities of greater resort,

L E T T E R LXXXI.

Terni,

FROM Foligno to this place, the road was flanked on either side, by sloping lands of rich and laboured cultivation. Foligno is a town of some traffic, and much fraud. The British minister resident at Florence, (Lord Harvey,) was by some accident passing on this route. Whatever be the subject of his journey, it is certain that he went *incog.* to the confines of Rome, and is returning to Florence by this little-frequented route. The politicians of this place are greatly perplexed to account for his Lordship's appearance amongst them; under such circumstances, they regard it as full of mystery. He paid us a visit with much politeness, and I had an opportunity of laying before him a specimen of that sort of information which
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the politicians of Foligno possessed. For in a newspaper of the place, which I was not a little surprized to meet with, it was hinted with some confidence, that an union was in agitation of the crowns of England and France, by the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Madame Royale. This may serve to shew you, how much these people are admitted into the secrets of state.

I rose early on the following morning, in order to obtain, before my departure from Foligno, a sight of the Madonna of Raphael, preserved in the convent Des Comtesses. My guide and myself had concerted the hour and the means, but alas! when I approached the door of the chapel and demanded admittance, a number of Franciscans, who were assembled at their devotions, growled refusal.

From Foligno to Spoleto the track conducted us through a country whose beauties have not disappeared in the month of December. The air was soft, the sky deliciously serene above us, and every where

around were scenes of that ornamental description, which confound, in the traveller's eye, all distinction of seasons. In proportion as we advanced, the state of the country still improved; mountains of the most picturesque forms presented themselves. Embosomed upon the heights of these, were castles, monasteries, and towns, interspersed with olive gardens, the bloom of whose fruit reflected in various hues the rays of the sun. We alighted on our route, to view the little temple by the road side, consecrated, as the lovers of antiquity affirm, to the god Clitumnus; and as men of less enthusiasm, and therefore probably of more judgment, say, to some modern Divinity. Spoleto was the boundary of this day's journey, and the hour of our arrival was sufficiently early to visit the Gothic Aqueduct, which here connects the mountain of St. Francis with Spoleto. It is a stupendous building of ten arches, the lowest of which is estimated to stand more than six hundred feet above its
founda-

foundation. Its history is carried back to the times of Theodoric, and it forms in its present state, an object of great magnificence. The mountain against which it rests, has many wild and picturesque beauties. A loose and irregular shrubbery overspreads it from the summit to the narrow channel below; and intermixed with the masses of stone which hang upon its slopes, the tangling shoots exhibit those light and negligent ornaments, which art can never successfully imitate. I was given to understand that a portrait of the Virgin by St. Luke, was among the inestimable rarities of Spoleto—but I heretically contented myself with the report of its miraculous properties; and, glancing simply at the pompous inscriptions which announce the pride of this place, as the “caput umbriæ,” and the town so celebrated by the flight of Hannibal—composed myself to an anticipation of those beauties which I was to see in the Cascade of Terni.

L E T T E R LXXXII.

Citta Castellana.

THE Cascade of Terni is formed by the fall of the Velino into the Nera, (antiently the Nar—" Narque albescentibus aquis—in Tiberim properans." *Sil. Ital.*) The Velino is a pretty considerable river of a navigable depth, and takes its rise in Monte Abruzzo; separating, in its passage to the point of descent, the town of Rhieti, from its suburbs. There are many circumstances attending this Cascade, which render it not only an object of astonishment to the traveller, but of interest to the naturalist. The river Velino once formed a marsh in the valley of Rhieti, highly prejudicial to the country, and whose waters had the singular property of petrification. This circumstance is attested by Pliny: "In lacu Velino lignum dejectum lapideo cortice induitur." The chan-

nel through which the Velino now passes, in its way to the point of descent, was dug by order of Clement VIII. The calcareous particles with which the water is impregnated, have here concreted in their passage, and overlaid the whole superficies of this bed with a substance resembling the solidity of marble. Hence this level has acquired the name of Piano del Marmore, or the Marble Level; and the Cascade itself, La Caduta del Marmore, or the Marble Cascade. The track from which it is approached from the town of Terni, is singularly picturesque. Cut for the greater part out of the solid rock, it pursues a winding course, and furnishes, by a gradual yet constant ascent, numerous and varied views of the surrounding scenery. The rapidity of the river in that channel, which is hewn out of the rock to give passage to its waters, is scarcely to be imagined. It is here that the spectator is usually conducted first, in order that he may see the quantum of force with which this
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body of water hastens to its fall. It is impossible, to regard without dizziness, the extreme velocity of this part of the current. Stones of considerable weight are buoyed up by the rapidity of the motion. The next point of view, is that which from a small terrace conveys to the eye this powerful stream, precipitated from the extremity of its marble level with all that violence which it has already acquired by the compression of its waters. The stream thus precipitated is received in a rocky basin, scooped out by the force of the waters, and from whose base it is discharged to a second receiver, amidst a vast profusion of foam and uproar. Descending thus with a rapidity regularly diminished by the re-action of two successive rocks, the river enters the Nera, and proceeds to join the imperial Tiber. A scene of greater and more terrific magnificence cannot be pictured by the imagination. The force and velocity of the current, in the point preparatory to its descent, is most tremend-

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L E T T E R LXXXIII.

ous. It is difficult to decide—so different are the calculations upon this subject—its accurate measurement. The Pere Carrara has fixed its total height from the Piano del Marmore to the level of the Nera, at 1871 Roman palms. The tumult of its waters, reverberated in a thousand directions;—the frothy clouds which issued from the valley;—the arching rocks which overhung the gulph;—and the luxuriant shrubs which scattered their delicate shades;—formed together a picture of romantic sublimity, too impressive to be easily supplanted by any scenes of secondary beauty.

L E T T E R LXXXIII.

Rome, Dec. 7.

IT was between Spoleto and Terni, that we passed the highest point of Appennine upon this route, and we have been since regularly descending. I could not pass through
Terni,

Terni, without feeling an emotion of classical pleasure. It was the birth-place of Tacitus, and the mind is forcibly impressed with scenes thus connected with those it has learned to admire. Johnson has expressed, in his masterly imitation of the Roman poets, the same sentiment :

Struck with the spot which gave Eliza birth,
We kneel; and kiss the consecrated earth.

IMIT. Sat. 3. Juv.

Our route from Terni lay along the beautiful valley which connects this town with Narni. The waters of the Nera, gracefully discomposed, and rendered musically sonorous by the influx of the Velino, roll along this charming vale, in their way to the point of junction with the Tiber. The ruins of the great bridge, which once connected the two opposite mountains, and over which passed the high road to Peruggia, stands at no great distance from the town of Narni. The only entire arch which now remains, discovers it to have been, whatever were its form,

form, of bold and sublime construction. Blocks of stone composed without cement, and compacted into an apparently solid mass, convey an high idea of the perfection to which the arts were carried in the age of Augustus. What was once Otriculum, is now a little dirty post town, and preserves more of its name than its substance,—still retaining the appellation of Oricoli. Numerous vestiges of ruined monuments are visible in its environs, and different sides of the roads yet shew the remains of antient fabrics, and heaps of crumbling materials. The very serpentine course which the Tiber pursues, engaged particularly my attention in passing from Narni. The level surface of the country allowed the eye to observe the flexions of this stream over a considerable space. The beauties of cultivation gradually disappeared as we approached Citta Castellana. It was from this miserable town, once the capital seat of the Falisci, and taken by Camillus, A. U. 359, that we yesterday finished our journey

journey to this metropolis. Scenes of natural beauty had been for some time receding; and now, in proportion as we advanced, the aspect of the country increased in that deformity which neglected agriculture and reduced population have introduced into the most fertile and productive soil under the Heavens. A few scattered huts, and these for the most part sinking into ruins, serve rather to heighten the picture of desolation; and to awaken a more lively degree of sensibility in the bosom of the contemplative traveller. At length the dome of St. Peter's rising amidst this weary waste, indicated our approach to ROME, which received us by an entrance majestic, and expressive of the genius of this antient capital.



